

LONDON READER

of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

No. 33.—VOL. II.]

FOR THE WEEK ENDING DECEMBER 26 1863.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]



CHRISTMAS;

ITS CUSTOMS, CEREMONIES, AND TRADITIONS.

Once again, once again,
Christmas wreaths are twining;
Once again, once again,
The mistletoe is shining!

Time is marching through the land
Decked with leaf and berry;
He leads the old year in his hand,
But both the churls are merry.

He speaketh in the clanging bells,
He shouts at every portal;
God speed the tidings that he tells—
"Good-will and peace to mortal!"

ALTHOUGH the LONDON READER as yet is little more than six months old, it has already won for itself those "troops of friends" (to use a Shakespearian phrase which is no less applicable to periodicals than it is to persons)—who are usually considered to attend only on the ripeness of age. To these—and their name is legion—at this season for the interchange of kindly wishes, we hereby make our bow, and cordially wish them, one and all, a right "MERRY CHRISTMAS!"

And having in this time-honoured phrase—which is so brief, but which contains such a world of happy meanings—acquitted ourselves of the "compliments of the season" towards our readers, we will take leave to hold a social chat with them anent the customs, festivities, and amenities of the merry Christmas tide.

There is no festivity which appeals to so wide a range of human sympathies, or is blended so inseparably with our social life, as the season of Christmas. Year by year, as its kindly greetings are renewed, our homes are decorated with holly, ivy, and mirth-moving mistletoe; our churches are adorned with evergreens; the yule log burns on our hearths; the boar's head occupies its pre-eminence in pride of place; the noble

"baron" and the ever-popular "sir-loin," assume their stations of honour on the festive board; with the lordly turkey and the savoury goose. In brief, the field, the forest, the river, and the sea, give up their choicest produce to gladden the heart of man. Christmas pies are on all tables; the waits sing their carols; the mummers act their mimes; the children revel in their holidays and brand-new toys; the old forget their age; the busy lay by their cares; scattered families are brought together; parted friends are reconciled; the bitter pains of poverty are lightened by generous largesse; and even a gleam of the general joy finds its way into the recesses of the workhouses, and penetrates the gloom of the prison-cell. For the great Event with which the Christian world is ringing, has, to use the expression of a sacred writer, made all things new. It interprets the common face of nature, so that the waste places blossom as the rose; it strikes the key-note of the universal heart—the songs that are sung round the domestic hearth, as well as the hymns that are chanted in the sanctuary;—and while it sheds a halo of unselfish joy round the last days of the dying year, it lights with hope the uncertain coming one, standing, as it were, a-tiptoe, eager to unfold itself.

Some writers hold that the celebration, or rather the idea, of Christmas is as old as the era of Paradise, when the announcement was made that the reign of evil should cease; that the knowledge of it continued unimpaired to the time of Babel, and afterwards remained in its integrity with the chosen people; but among the scattered nations it lingered as a tradition, and, in the course of time became confounded with wrong notions of religion and connected with the fancied achievements of the false gods of heathenism; most notably in those of the Celts, the Romans, and the Scandinavian and Teutonic races. With the

practices, however, of paganism in this respect, we will not now concern ourselves; though they made their way into the worship of the Christians, and became to so great an extent mixed up with the earlier Christmas festivities as to be strongly denounced by the church. What we propose to discuss are the customs and practices subsequent to the Nativity, and arising directly out of the celebration of Christ's mass or Christmas day. Upon that festival are engrafted various legends as well as superstitions, which, though calling down the animadversion of the church, are, nevertheless, not without a certain mystic, if not poetical, interest.

One of the earliest, perhaps, of these is contained in a hymn of Prudentius, and is to the effect that, upon the birth of the Saviour, "the cry of the Holy Child imparted to the earth a verdant spring; at its sound a revived globe cast off its ancient slough, the land was covered with thick crops of flowers, and the dry sands of the desert became redolent with frankincense. With the birth of the Sacred Child the hard stones were softened, and honey flowed from the rocks." This hymn was indeed regarded as stating a literal fact; and the miracle of the appearance of the earth being changed on the first Christmas night was believed to be of constant recurrence at every Christmas. A German author has authenticated this (what will not German authors authenticate?), and published in a work on Christmas an acrostic specifying the names of the flowers that always bloom on that holy day. The tradition as to the ox and the ass being in the stable on the birth of our Lord, and recognizing him, is well known, and is supported by the words of Isaiah and Habakkuk; and there is also another to the effect that these animals not only recognized their divine Master, but worshipped him. Connected with the idea which was in the early times

prevalent, that not only angel voices made the announcement of the coming of the Saviour upon the earth, but that the dumb creation also acted a part in that sublime Event, there are to be found many curious legends. One of these, and almost universally believed, was that at twelve o'clock on every Christmas night the cattle bowed their knees. "It was once believed," says Mr. Timbs, "that at midnight all the cattle in the cowhouse would be found kneeling." Another antiquarian writer, Brand, says that a "Cornish peasant told him of his having, with some others, watched several oxen in their stalls on the eve of Christmas day, and that at twelve o'clock they observed the two oldest oxen fall upon their knees, and (as he expressed it in the idiom of the county) make a cruel moan, like Christian creatures."

Another similar notion, which also generally prevailed, was that the power of speech was bestowed upon animals on Christmas night. In Germany it is believed that only persons free from "mortal sin" can understand what animals say to one another on Christmas night; and in France, the belief was that the cattle themselves, were deprived of the faculty of speaking if those in charge of them were in a state of sin; and in every case the privilege was considered to be lost to the animals when the hour of midnight had struck. This credulous belief in the influence of Christmas night upon animals is referred to by our myriad-minded poet—for what sentiment, it has been well asked, that ever stirred the heart or illuminated the fancy of mankind, has escaped the penetration of Shakespeare?—

It faded on the crowing of the cock.
Some say that ever 'gainst that season comes,
Wherein our Saviour's birth is celebrated,
This bird of dawning loquacity all night long;
And then, they say, no spirit dares stir abroad;
The nights are wholesome; then no planets strike,
No fairy takes, nor witch hath power to harm,
So hallowed and so gracious is the time.

In connection with this supposed sympathy of animals with the Nativity (says a recent writer), there has prevailed for centuries, in many countries, the custom of farmers supplying their cattle and fowl on that day and night, with a greater abundance of food. In parts of Germany, we are informed, no one ever thinks of rising from the dinner-table without giving the household a good hunch of bread. Amongst the Albanians, it is the custom to distribute the first of the Christmas meal-cakes in this manner: It is broken on the horns of an ox, and then shared amongst its companions; (a very similar practice prevails in Devonshire, and which we shall notice further on). In the whole of Northern Europe, it is the custom for every peasant to erect before his door a pole, to which is fastened a sheaf of oats, "in order," it is said, "that during the cold winter nights the little birds may feel the benefit, and enjoy the blessings of the graces that are given to mankind on Christmas day." This kindly custom, we believe, was attempted to be introduced into England by a Kentish clergyman a few years since, but fell off again. In Sweden they have a pretty rhyme on the custom:—

The fields are froze,
But at my door
There's corn in store
For birdlings dear:
Come then to me!
To eat you're free,
And merry be
With Christmas cheer.

In the Christmas legends of France and the sagas of Norway, birds are connected with other incidents, supposed to have occurred in the life of our Lord, and notably the redbreast. The belief, indeed, was general, that, not only animals, but all nature itself, testified in various ways its comprehension of the great event celebrated at Christmas. It was supposed that at the moment of the birth there was a universal pause—that a profound silence prevailed over all the world; the birds rested in their flight, that the cattle ceased to feed, that man became motionless, and that when the momentous birth took place, whilst the angels and shepherds joined in the hymn of praise and thanksgiving, the stars glittered with an added lustre, and that even the sun itself twice bounded with joy—as it is still said, in many Catholic countries (Ireland, for instance), to do on the mornings of Christmas and Easter Sunday.

The notion that to leave oats or barley in the open air on Christmas night, for the dew to moisten the grain, imparted to it a sanitary power most effective in cattle diseases, was also prevalent; this was an ancient British superstition. In Germany (which is perhaps the land par excellence of Christmas traditions and practices) it is still believed that oats saturated with the dew on Christmas night are unusually productive. So also cattle feeding out that night are considered to be much benefited; whilst, in some places the cloths with which horses are rubbed are exposed to the dew, in the belief that such cloths not only give the animals finer coats, but also render them stronger and fatter. Another practice was to carry a

bundle of hay round a church three times on Christmas night, for the purpose of being enabled thereby to fatten cattle with a smaller quantity of food.

Peculiar virtues were attributed to Christmas food. In some parts of the continent a bit of bread which has been blessed on each of the three great festivals of Christmas, is held to be a preservative against tempests and hydrophobia; but if this bread be given to a dog in good health, it at once makes the animal mad. A similar notion formerly obtained among ourselves; in Brittany it is still believed that bread baked on Christmas night would remain good for two years; and in Germany, there was a belief that the crumbs of bread gathered on Christmas night might be made use of to discern the presence of evil spirits and to keep away bad thoughts; and a cognate superstition to this was, that wherever the crumbs of such bread fell upon the earth there sprang up the herb called "motherwort." In Denmark, bread baked at Christmas time was kept till spring; and then, being crumbled very small and mixed with seed, was, for its virtues, given to horses, and was also eaten by men. In Silesia, the bones of fish caught at Christmas were put about the roots of trees, in order to make them productive; and in Poland, portions of Christmas food were given to cattle as a protection against witchcraft.

As connected with this branch of our Christmas chit-chat, a German writer, Herr Cassell, says of the cakes and sweetmeats which form so important a part of present Christmas festivities: "There is nothing which the people of Germany like better than Christmas dainties, and gingerbreads in particular, I mean the confectionary for which Nuremberg has become famous. It was a truly Christian thought to make Christmas thus relishing to children. On Christmas night there are Christmas barley-sugar sticks and gigantic butter-rolls. Cakes made with butter and honey are a most fit Christmas treat; for in Isaiah, after the prophet has announced the coming of Him who was to be called Emmanuel, are the words, 'He shall eat butter and honey, that he may know how to refuse the evil and to choose the good.' Hence followed the ancient practice, when a child had been baptized, to moisten its lips with a mixture of milk and honey. Hence too, in Christmas plays, offerings of pats of butter and flakes of honey were made to the Infant. Hence also, the great liking at all times for sweetmeats. In Syria, the favourite dainties were cakes of honey and poppies; in Moravia, of poppy dumplings; in Silesia, of poppy puddings; and in the northern countries, of sugared groats. It is, too, a very old custom to make in confectionary all kinds of ecclesiastical decorations and signs, and figures of saints, as well as of animals, such as deer, horses, peacocks, boars, &c.

As the Creator of all things had when an infant lain upon straw, in commemoration of the fact it was the practice at Christmas time in many places to strew the houses and churches with straw. "This straw," says the same writer, "was preserved, and regarded as a wonderful cure for sick animals, and a protection against diseases. In Sweden, the houses as well as the churches are littered with straw; and it is still believed that if given to cattle, when they are first sent out to pasture, it protects them from sickness; that if scattered on the fields, it fertilizes the crop, and produces an abundant harvest; and that if laid on the geese-trough, it protects the geese from the attacks of the fox. In the Slavonian districts they have another custom; they cover the floors of their huts with straw, and put bundles of it in the corners of their rooms; they then throw the straw into the air, and from the manner in which it falls, they fancy they can predict the future. In Lusatia, bundles of straw are placed under the table, and on it all those who are seated together at their Christmas dinner place their feet; after dinner each person carries out the bundle of straw on which his feet has rested, and ties it round the trees, in the firm belief that it will be very useful to them. In Thuringia, it has been the custom to tie bundles of wet straw, upon Christmas night, round the stems of fruit-trees, for the purpose of having a good crop."

The practices at Christmas time are all full of their own peculiar meaning. A contrast to the sufferings of the Creator, was to be the happiness conferred by his coming; and hence, it was a custom in old times to supply the priest with an abundance of fuel, in order that the very poorest might obtain from him the wherewith to make a good festival fire. The burning of the yule fire was an immemorial practice amongst the Scandinavian, Teutonic, and Celtic races; and when they turned from paganism to Christianity, they perpetuated the practice. A large block of wood was to be found in every homestead on Christmas night. The Scandinavians called it the "yule log," whilst the Teutonic races named it the "Christmas block;" the Celts of France designated it the "Souché de Noël"—the term Noël, or Christmas, being equivalent to Emmanuel, i.e., "God with us." In some parts of France the people sprinkled the log with salt and water, as a kind of consecration, and in others a liba-

tion of wine was poured upon it previous to its being placed on the fire. In Albania, the same practice existed; the people also preserving its ashes, and scattering them over the vineyards, to make them fruitful. When the yule "log" or "block" was first brought into the house, every one stood up, and hailed its appearance with joyful exclamations, such as "Welcome, welcome, precious log! Come now, and enjoy thyself with a good merry blaze!" Our own poet, Herrick, has this carol for the ceremony of bringing in the Christmas log:—

Come, bring, with a noise,
My merry, merry boys,
The Christmas log to the fire!
For my good dame she
Bids ye all be free
And drink to your hearts' desiring!
With the last year's brand
Light the new block; and
For good success in his spending,
On your pastries play
That sweet luck may
Come while the log is a-tending.

The practice still prevails in Yorkshire (and we daresay in other parts of the country), exactly as described by Herrick. The "yule clog," as it is called in the dialect of the Ridings, is placed upon the fire in the early part of the evening; although the ceremony of lighting it with a brand saved from the previous year's block, of putting by a fragment of it when it cools, to preserve the house from fire during the coming year, &c., is mostly confined to the rural districts. So, at least, it is stated, in a curious book on a very curious subject, the "Dialect of Leeds."

As the servants, says Mr. Timbs, were entitled to ale while the log lasted, they usually got as large a one as the fireplace would hold. In some places the log was bandaged nine times round; and as each bandage was burnt off, it was usual to hand round a service of ale, mingled with spirits. At Ripon (and many other places) the coopers formerly presented their customers with a Christmas log. In Devonshire the ash-fagot is cut with some ceremony; occasionally it weighs as much as three hundredweight, when the blaze upon the hearth is tremendous. A company of mummers, in grotesque dresses, appear during the evening, when the mirth culminates to its point.

The presence still of the boar's head at grand Christmas entertainments, no less than the burning of the yule log, are evidences of the strong vitality of national manners and customs, and proofs of how deeply, with all our modern refinements, we are still imbued with the Scandinavian spirit of our ancestors. The solemn manner of serving the boar's head is nowhere marked with greater ceremony than at Queen's College, Oxford; The custom of feasting upon the boar's head is dilated upon and accounted for at considerable length by the German writer to whom we have already alluded. Who is there, he demands, that, upon Christmas night, will not have roast pork of one description or another upon his table? In ancient times, this practice was still more rigidly adhered to. In the northern countries, where boar-hunting and swine-feeding universally prevail, it is still strictly observed. On every table there is exhibited, with the fitting magnificence that suits the Christmas night, a boar's head. In Sweden it is the invariable rule to have boar's head, and it is there called *julhöns*. In Uckermark it is indispensable to present the Christmas guest with cabbage, hog's-pudding, and a boar's head. In Silesia they have smoked bacon and dried fruit. In the Scandinavian countries no one would think of a Christmas festival without swine's flesh; and, wherever it is not possible to have it in reality, they have the figure of a pig baked in dough, set upon the table, and it is called *yulagall*. But why was there this particular veneration for the boar among the pagan Scandinavians and Germans, it may be asked? Because, we are told by another writer, "men swore by the boar, on account of its being the favourite animal of Freir and Freia" (the goddess who gave name to Friday).

From the Christmas ceremonies and customs which may be said to be tinged with, if not originated in paganism, turn we to the consideration of those which are clearly of Christian origin. In most Catholic churches and in all convents, says a writer well-acquainted with the subject, it was the practice to have a "crib" constructed at Christmas time, to exhibit the incarnation of the great Event which has consecrated for all time the 25th of December. In France, Germany, and Italy, it was the custom to have the crib behind the altar, and some of the ceremonies were very curious. The Blessed Virgin was represented by an image. Then a boy appeared as an angel, and announced the birth of Christ; then came the shepherds, and sang "Peace on earth," after which, a dialogue took place between them. This was followed by the saying of mass, and songs were sung to which the child in the cradle was rocked. There were not, however, the same ceremonies everywhere; in many places the priest sought for, found, and rocked the child, and then exhibited it to the congregation. Upon a holy Christmas night,

says a writer, describing the manners of former times in the town of Hof, and at vespers, it was, according to ancient custom, to have the rocking of the infant Saviour. When the organist played "Resonet in laudibus," then the choir sang the words:

Help me, Joseph, good and mild,
Help me rock the little child.

This hymn was sung and played in dancing time: and then the little boys and girls in the church stood up, and all began dancing together around the altar; and this they did in a merry manner, to express the joy that was felt at the blessed Birth which had taken place that night. Even so late as twenty years ago, it was customary, at other towns in Germany, to commence at twelve o'clock, on Christmas night, to "rock the child" for an hour, from the tower of the principal church. In a cradle, surrounded by lights, was a doll child, and, encircling it, were the choir, who sang the "Gloria in Excelsis" and were responded to by a "rocking-song" hymn. In Saxony there was a cognate practice to this ceremony. On Christmas night a rope was fastened from the church tower to the ground, and a boy dressed up as an angel, and bearing a cross in his hand, slid gently down the rope, whilst singing

From heaven, my home,
To you I come.

But this custom was discontinued owing to an accident by the breaking of the rope.

One of the most pleasing observances of Christmas-tide, is the ringing of the church bells at night. What a grand and sublime story is that which they announce! And with what a weird sweetness their joyous peals ring out upon the still midnight! Dull and dead indeed must be the heart whose pulses do not become quickened, and that feels no stirring in unison with the mystic time, as the triumphant carillons flit the air, on Christmas night!

In Friesland, upon the first ringing of the bells, at twelve o'clock, the people assemble, we are told, and sing hymns in honour of the festival. In the north of Germany the choir assembled in the church tower, and when the bells began to ring, they sang psalms, accompanied by all the young persons of the neighbourhood. In England bell-ringing is universal on Christmas morning, and at Dewsbury one of the church bells is tolled, as at a funeral, and is called the "devil's bell"; the moral of which is, that the devil died when Christ was born. His satanic majesty is considered to have a great antipathy to bells; and by the sounds, especially of Christmas bells, Satan and all evil spirits were believed to be promptly put to flight, and any unhappy mortals in their power were at once released from their grasp. In connection with this practice of bell-ringing at Christmas, there are a great many legends as to the bells of churches submerged by the sea, overwhelmed by landslips, or buried by earthquakes, being heard to ring upon Christmas eve. The practice of ringing the church bells to announce the coming of the greatest of all Christian days, originated most probably with the old rule of the Catholic church, in having the first mass of the festival at midnight.

Of the "Christmas-tree," which, though not of native origin, has now become an "institution" at Christmas time, we must say only a few words. Mr. Timbs observes that if it be not of English growth, there was something very like one introduced into one of the pageants of that "expensive Herr," as Carlyle calls Henry VIII.; and there is, moreover, a reference to such a tree in Stow; but it came, there is little doubt, from Germany, and has sprung into such amazing favour as it now enjoys with all our "tender juvenals" only within the last twenty years or so. Mr. Timbs compares it with the Egyptian palm-tree; "for the palm-tree puts forth a shoot every month, and a spray of this tree with twelve shoots on it was used in Egypt as a symbol of the year completed." The German writer, Herr Cassell, however, stoutly claims the "Christmas-tree" as the fitting emblem of the Germanic nature, the meaning of which does not seem very clear to us; and he observes that the planting of the fir-tree (which is the true Christmas-tree) before the doors in Fotherland corresponds to the English custom of decorating mansions and churches with evergreens. He maintains, moreover, that the "Christmas-tree" symbolizes at one and the same time the tree in Paradise that bore the forbidden fruit, and the tree of life—the Cross; and is at great pains to show that the fruit of the forbidden tree was—an apple. Well, it may have been, and the tree may symbolise all the Herr says it does, for anything we know to the contrary, or, we dare say, for aught our young Christmas revellers care. To them as to us, it is a tree that grows toys, and nothing else;—just as to Peter Bell—

A primrose by the river's brim
A simple primrose was to him—
And it was nothing more.

At present, in North Germany, according to

Coleridge, a personage on Christmas night is arrayed in high buskins, a white robe, a mask, and an enormous flax wig; he is designated Knecht (or Knight) Rupert, and goes round to every house, saying that his master, Jesus Christ, has sent him thither from heaven. The parents and elder children receive him with great pomp and ceremony, while the youngsters are terribly frightened. He then distributes to the good children the destined Christmas presents confided to him to distribute, and gives the parents a rod for the naughty children. About seven or eight years of age the children are let into the secret; and it is curious to see how carefully they preserve it from those who are still too young to be enlightened on the mystery.

And this brings us naturally to the mention of the Christmas mummers. These have been described by a French writer as "riotous persons who disguised themselves like deer and other animals, and going about the country, committed all sorts of follies." Many wild legends, and not a few tragical stories, are on record concerning these mediæval mummers, but we must pass them by.

The English mummers are the modern representatives of these disorderly individuals; but they, it must be said, carried on their mumming "with a difference," and did their spitting gently, as indeed they do still, for the Christmas play of "St. George and the Dragon" is yet extant in some parts of the country. It is evidently of great antiquity, and is performed in a similar manner in the extreme northern and western counties, and in nearly similar words, a circumstance which is all the more noticeable as the dialogue of the ancient mummers was scarcely ever committed to writing with a view to preservation. Mumming was practised by all classes; the higher decking themselves as emperors, popes, cardinals, &c., attended by train-bearers and esquires; the lower orders simply daubing themselves with any kind of pigment, and even soot.

From the mummers we turn to the carol-singers. Much could be said on this subject, but we have no space in which to say it; and our observations on this portion of the Christmas ceremonies must be brief. We can only give a foreign carol and a native one to illustrate the good old custom of carol-singing. In Germany there is sung a piece of rugged doggerel like the following:—

A holy night for the world forlorn

Was that in which our Lord was born.

Then sing high

A lullaby.

And with your gifts bid us good-bye.

The house, we're told,

Shall ne'er lack gold,

That pity has on poor and old.

Angels now sit behind your door.

Of apples and pears they have good store,

To fling us a few, and give us more:

Then hasten, hasten, for the night is weary,

And kindly tarry for the love of Mary!

In England there has been, of late years—and we regret to see it—a decline of carol-singing. The Christmas carols which were sung about from door to door, for a week at least, not twenty years ago, are now rarely heard. The custom of Christmas carolling prevails in Ireland in full vigour. In Scotland it is unknown. In Wales it is preserved to a greater extent than in England. There, after the turn of midnight on Christmas eve, divine service is celebrated, followed by the singing of carols to the accompaniment of the harp, and they are similarly sung in the houses during the continuance of the Christmas holidays. The following is a very curious Kentish carol, which is generally sung by children, who go about from house to house, singing it and begging Christmas alms. They repeat the last three words of the first line of each verse three times:—

As I sat under a sycamore-tree

I looked me out upon the sea,

A Christmas day in the morning.

I saw three ships a-sailing there,

The Virgin Mary and Christ they bare,

A Christmas day in the morning.

He did whistle, and she did sing,

And all the bells on earth did ring,

A Christmas day in the morning.

And now we hope to taste your cheer,

And wish you all a happy new year,

A Christmas day in the morning.

And now we must discourse a little of the mystic yet mirth-moving mistletoe.

The name of the mistletoe is derived by Johnson from *mystellan*, Sax.; *mistle*, Dan., birdlime; and *tan*, a twig. It is a parasitic plant, found wild in England, very rarely in Scotland, and nowhere, it is said, in Ireland. The "mistletoe," says Bacon, "groweth chiefly upon crab-trees, apple-trees, sometimes upon hazels, and rarely upon oaks; the mistletoe whereof is counted very medicinal: it is ever green, winter and summer, and beareth a white glistening berry; and it is a plant utterly different from the plant upon which it groweth."

The mystic uses of the plant are traced to the pagan

ages; it is stated to be identical with the golden branch referred to by Virgil, and is affirmed to have been used in the religious ceremonies of the Greeks and Romans, though it is alleged by some writers that the mistletoe so used was distinct from that of the present day. The Druid and Celtic nations called it *all-heal* and *gwidhel*.

The Druids celebrated the annual cutting of the mistletoe with great ceremony; the officiating Druid, being clad in white, cut the plant with a golden sickle, and, receiving it in a white cloth, carried it to and placed it on the altars. The mistletoe was dedicated to the Goddess Friga, the Venus of the Scandinavians; and it is not perhaps too great a stretch of fancy to imagine some connexion between this fact and the practice of kissing a fair one under its branches, which is now an indispensable "solemnity" of merry Christmas.

The period when the mistletoe came to be used among the evergreen decorations at Christmas time, cannot be clearly settled. Holly and ivy had carols written in their honour, even so early as the fourteenth century; but until the time of Herrick scarcely any poetical mention is to be found of the mistletoe. He thus alludes to it in company with other evergreens—

Down with the rosemary! and so

Down with the holly, ivy, all

Wherewith ye dress the Christmas hall!—

no doubt in satirical allusion to the then decreasing honours paid to Christmas customs. Shakespeare has a not very complimentary reference to it—

The trees, though summer, yet forlorn and lean,

Overcome with moss, and baleful mistletoe.

A writer in 1656 says of it: "The mistletoe is carried many miles, to set up in houses about Christmas time, when it is adorned with a white glistening berry;" and Gay thus refers to its use in decking the churches—

When rosemary and bays, the poet's crown,

Are bawled in frequent cries through all the town

Then judge the festival of Christmas near—

Christmas, the joyous period of the year;

Now with bright holly all the temples strew,

With laurel green and sacred mistletoe.

The fantastic notions attached to the mistletoe may lead us on to a notice of the superstitions which were formerly, and are, in part, still practised at Christmas time. It was, at one period, believed that during the hour preceding the commencement of Christmas day, the Prince of Darkness had more than ordinary power, and that as the time for his evil influence to be weakened was drawing nigh, he had permission in the meantime to make the most active use of his satanic powers. That hour was therefore the one of all others, in which persons seeking a knowledge of the future resorted to various absurd and unhalloved expedients. One of these was the going between the hours of eleven and twelve on Christmas eve to a well, where, looking down into its placid surface, the gazer expected to see the face of his or her destined wife or husband. According to the same superstitious notion, if a maiden wishes to know whether or not she is ever to be married, she goes between eleven and twelve o'clock on Christmas night to the hen-house door, and knocks at it. If the knock is responded to by the crowing of a cock, she will be married; but if her knock is followed by silence, she is doomed to a life of celibacy here, and to "lead apes" hereafter in a place which shall be nameless, but which makes one uncomfortable even to think about. There was another similar superstition practised with onions. Four onions are taken by a maiden and put in the four corners of her room on Christmas eve. To each of these onions is given the name of a bachelor of her acquaintance; and if any onion throws out shoots before the 6th of January, she will be married to the person whose name it bore. In Poland a maid would go into the farm-yard at midnight, and from which ever side she first heard a dog barking, she surmised that from that quarter of the compass would come her future husband. Maidens also crept into stables at midnight, and by the whinnying of the steeds they, —being doubtless "gifted to understand"—could tell whether they were to be married. We could cite a hundred other illustrations of the various superstitions practised on Christmas eve; not only formerly, but even in the present day. These practices have not ceased with the advance of civilization, nor have they been confined to the continent. They linger still in more than one locality in England. At Offham, near Arundel, on the evening of Christmas day, may be seen, a crowd of people, young and old, in an orchard, dancing round a large apple-tree, and repeating a rude chant to words of this import: "God bless this tree to the use of master! May it flourish, and bring forth abundantly—enough to fill a hat, to fill a basket, to fill a cart, to fill a waggon," &c. This is followed by rude, uncouth singing, and the same ceremony is performed round every apple and pear tree in the orchard. In Devonshire a certain apple-tree, as representative of the rest, is sprinkled

with cider, or a bowl of it is dashed upon the tree, or cakes dipped in cider are hung upon the branches, followed by an incantation, and a dance round the tree, and then the rustics go off to the feast. On the eve of old Christmas day are lighted thirteen fires, twelve (the apostles) in a circle, and a larger one round a pole in the centre (the Virgin Mary). While these fires are burning, the farm-labourers witness the respective brightness of the Apostolic and Virgin flames from some shed, into which they lead a cow, on whose horns a large plum cake has been stuck. The oldest labourer, taking a pail of cider, addresses the cow thus:

Here's to thy pretty face and thy white horn!
God send thy master a crop of corn.
Both wheat, rye, and barley, and all sorts of grain:
And next year, if we live, we'll drink to thee again.

The cider is then dashed in the face of the cow, who, by a toss of the head in consequence, generally throws the cake on the ground. If it fall forward, it is a sign of a good harvest next year; if backward, that it will be unfavourable. This commences the feast, which is usually kept up till the next morning.

Christmas, in all parts of the Christian world, has ever been noted as the season of good cheer and festive enjoyment, and nowhere more so than in England. But even "merry England" was not always merry at Christmas tide. The latter years of good Queen Bess, when her health and spirits failed, was a sad time for poor old Father Christmas and all his merry train of minstrels, mummers, and frolicsome followers, and from the hearty old gentleman that he was wont to be, he became, as one writer of the period complained,

A pinch-back, cut-throat churl,
That keeps no open house, as he should do—
Delighteth in no game of fellowship,
Loves no good deed, and hateth talk;
But sitteth in a corner turning crabs,
Or coughing o'er a warmed pot of ale.

"Do but imagine," says another, "now, what a sad Christmas we all kept in the country, without either carols, wassail-bowls, dancing about May-poles, shoeing the mare, hoodman-blind, hot cockles, or any of our old Christmas gambols. No, not so much as choosing king and queen on Twelfth-night."

Nor was old English Christmas hospitality always of the free-handed, jovial kind that we have been accustomed to believe; in fact, the neglect of the gentry and nobility to practise a liberal hospitality at Christmas time, excited the strong indignation of James I., who even went so far as to issue a proclamation enjoining the gentry and nobility, who were in the habit of flocking to London at that season, to return to their country homes, and practise again the hospitality which they had long neglected. We find an amusing reference to this in a letter of Mr. Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton: "Divers lords and personages of quality have made means to be dispensed withal for going into the country this Christmas, according to the proclamation. But it will not be granted; so that they pack away on all sides, for fear of the worst." Charles I. also found it necessary to insist by proclamation that the gentry and nobility should at this season return from London to their houses in the country, and "there keep their habitations and their hospitality."

Bacon, in his "Apophthegms," and Bishop Hall, in his "Satires," also make censurable reference to the gentry's desertion of their country residences; and that the circumstance was deeply resented by the popular feeling we have the evidence of several curious old ballads to show. From one of these we take a stanza or two. It is entitled, "Christmas, his Lamentation for the loss of his Acquaintance; showing how he is fust to leave the Country and come to London:—"

Christmas is my name, farre have I gone,
Have I gone, without regard;
Whereas great men by flocks there be flowne,
There be flowne, to London-ward:
There they in pomp and pleasure doe waste
That which our Christmas was wont to feast,
Well-a-day!
Houses where musick was wont for to ring,
Nothing but teares and howls doe sing,
Well-a-day, well-a-day,
Well-a-day, where should I stay?
Christmas beefe and bread is turn'd into stones,
Into stones and silken raggs;
And Ladie Money sleepes and makes moanes,
And makes moanes in milers' bags;
Houses where pleasures once did abound,
Nought but a dogge and a shepherd is found,
Well-a-day!
Places where Christmas revells did keepe,
Now are become habitations for sheepe,
Well-a-day, &c.

The Commonwealth, under "old Noll" and the Roundheads, also girded sore at poor old Father Christmas; and strove not only to put him down, but to annihilate him altogether. Evelyn writes:

"Christmas day; no sermon anywhere, no church being permitted to be open, so observed it at home."
The efforts of the Puritan leaders to strike out

Christmas day from the Christian calendar, succeeded but badly, for we find the following debate taking place on the 25th December, 1656, in Cromwell's parliament:—

"Col. Matthews: 'The House is thin, much, I believe, occasioned by observation of this day. I have a short Bill to prevent the superstition for the future. I desire it to be read.'—Mr. Robinson: 'I could get no rest all night for the preparation of this foolish day's solemnity. This renders us in the eyes of the people to be profane. We are, I doubt, returning to Popery.'—Major-General Packer, with others, thought the Bill 'well-timed.'—'You see how the people keep up these superstitions to your face, stricter in many places than they do the Lord's day. One may pass from the Tower to Westminster, and not a shop open nor a creature stirring.'"

Some pretty specimens of the asceticism and bigotry of the Puritans are on record. Amongst other instances, I remember (says a writer in "Notes and Queries") the laudations bestowed upon a certain Mrs. Kelly, "the Bristol Deborah," who "would keep open her shop on the time they call Christmas day, and sit sewing in her shop, as a witness for God in the midst of the city, in the face of the sun, and in the sight of all men!" Was not this old lady a truly wonderful woman?

The Restoration, however, changed all that, and when the "King came to his own again," old Father Christmas was once more enthroned also, and had due honours and observance rendered to him, as in previous times. The gentry retired from London to their country seats, and kept open house, entertaining their tenants and tradesfolk bountifully, after the ancient manner. This change gave, as might be expected, great popular satisfaction, which found its expression in a rousing ballad, which may be considered a complete answer to the complaint made in the one already cited. We give a few of the best stanzas. It is entitled, "Old Christmas returned; or Hospitality revived":—

All you that to feasting and mirth are inclin'd,
Come, here is good news for to pleasure your mind,
Old Christmas is come for to keep open house,
He scorn to be guilty of starving a mouse;
Then come, boys, and welcome, for dyet the chief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, mince-pies, and roast beef.
A long time together he hath been forgot,
They scarce could afford for to hang on the pot;
Such misery sneaking in England hath been,
As by our forefathers ne'er us'd to be seen;
But now he's return'd you shall have in brief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, mince-pies, and roast beef.
The times were ne'er good since old Christmas was fled,
And all hospitality hath been dead,
No mirth at our festivals late did appear,
They scarcely would part with a cup of March beer;
But now you shall have, for the ease of your grief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, mince-pies, and roast beef.

Young gallants and ladies shall sit it along,
Each room in the house to the music shall throng;
Whilst jolly carouses about they shall pass,
And each country swain trip about with his lass;
Meantime goes the caterer to fetch in the chief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, mince-pies, and roast beef!
Then let all curmudgeons who dote on their wealth,
And value their treasure much more than their health,
Go hang themselves up, if they will be so kind!
Old Christmas with them but small welcome shall find;
They will not afford to themselves, without grief,
Plum-pudding, goose, capon, mince-pies, and roast beef.

Thus did the "whirligig of time bring about his revenges." From the lean and "pinch-backed churl," which poor flouted Father Christmas had temporarily become, from neglect and the sour reign of the Praise-God-Barebones crew, he regained under the "merry monarch" the jovial look and portly presence he wore of old;—Christmas, in a word, became once more "jolly Christmas," and "jolly Christmas" still remains. We have replaced him on his throne as the undisputed Sovereign of the Season;—and if his "following" has been shorn of some of his old-time uncouth attendants, the mimers and mummers—*et hoc genus omne*—he is still surrounded by laughter-loving troops of young and old—still is he accompanied on his right hand and on his left hand by Love and Charity—while Mirth and Joy precede him, and Gratitude and Happiness wait upon him. For our "old Christmas" is not only Lord of Luxurious Living, and Monarch of Mirth, he is also King of Kindness and Benevolence, and the Suzerain of Sweet Affections. Therefore do we greet his annual advent with gladness; and wish that his reign—brief though it be in period—may be marked with all fitting rejoicing and revelry, so long as the sublime Event, the divine Birth which it commemorates, shall be honoured by the Christian world, and dear to the hearts of all men—and that must be until the end of time.

THE NEW ACT ON SAVINGS BANKS.—On Saturday last the new Act on Savings Banks, passed in the late session, came into operation. The law is now amended and consolidated in one statute. The new Act is not to affect Post-office Savings Banks. The interest to be paid by the Government to the trustees is to be

£3 5s. per cent. per annum, and the interest to depositors is not to exceed £3 0s. 10d. per cent. Infants and married women can make deposits, and should the husbands of the latter give notice the money is to be paid to them. All depositors are restricted to one savings bank on pain of forfeiture. The interest to be calculated half-yearly, on the 20th November and 20th May, and to be added to the principal. No new bank is to be formed without the approval of the National Debt Commissioners. The rules are to be certified by the barrister appointed. In the event of death or bankruptcy of any officer holding money the trustees are to be the first paid out of the estate.

OYSTER FISHERY.—A company has been formed to establish a new oyster fishery on the Kent coast, at Herne Bay.

It would appear that the fortifications of Corfu will be dismantled, against the wishes of the Greek Government.

DANGEROUS DIET.—At the rifle company's range at Woodlands, Mr. James McMorran lost a valuable cow, through licking up the spent balls on the pasture. A veterinary surgeon found that the stomach contained about 3½ lbs of lead.

The farm of Wheatlands, in Mid-Lothian, which was let a few years ago, on a nineteen years' lease, at the rent of £1,180, has just been re-let at the reduced rent of £1,000, with a year's rent given back to put it in order.

It is reported that an arrangement has been entered into between the South-Eastern and London and Brighton Companies by which the latter will be enabled to carry passenger traffic to and from the Charing-cross station.

FINDING MONEY.—Sheriff Strathern, of Glasgow, decided, on Thursday week, that in all cases where money or valuable articles are found, and not claimed after a certain period, the property belongs to the Crown and not to the finders.

TITLES.—The Emperor of China, though only fourteen years old, is great on titles. He styles himself the Governor of Five Thousand Islands, Brother to the Sun, Moon and Stars, and Cousin to the Barbarian Queen (meaning the Queen of England, who must feel highly complimented by the honour done her!)

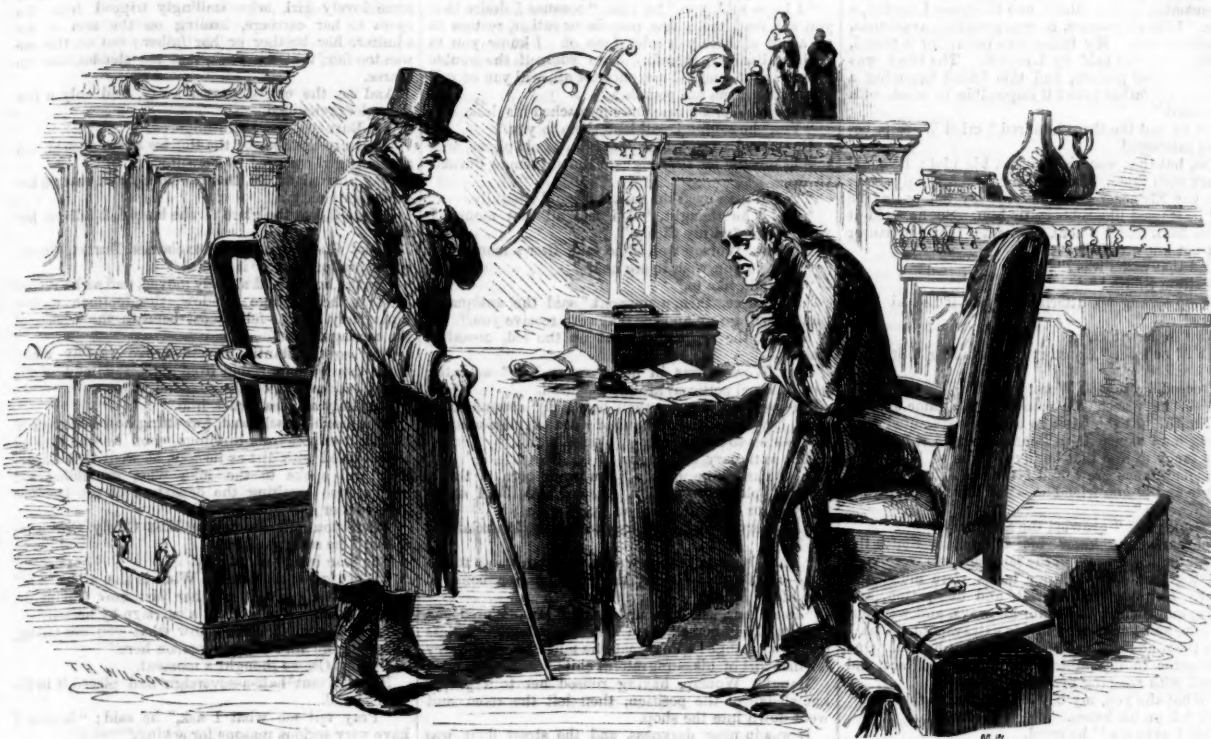
THE GREAT SHIP.—The money subscribed by the shareholders towards realising the £60,000 required to repair and set the Great Eastern afloat has been returned to the shareholders, and henceforth all the affairs connected with the vessel will have to pass through the Court of Chancery.

THE LATE DANISH KING.—The late King of Denmark was fifty-six years of age. He was thrice married—in the first two instances to princesses, from each of whom he was divorced; on the third occasion,morganatically, to the Countess Dauner, originally a milliner and dancer.

DEATH OF A CENTENARIAN.—On the 3rd instant, Thomas Davies, a superannuated pilot, died at Frog-street, Swansea, having attained the age of 100 years, within 22 days. Deceased was born on the 25th of December, 1768. Consequently, had he survived until next Christmas day, he would have been 100 years old.

WAR PRICES IN AMERICA.—The following prices are now asked at Charleston for provisions. Butter, which was before the war about 6d. per lb., is now 16s. 8d.; coffee, which was about 7½d., is now 19s.; tea, which was 2s. 2d. to 2s. 6d. is now about £2 10s. per lb.; beef, which was 4d. per lb., is now 4s. 2d.; one reel of sewing cotton, which formerly cost about 3d., is now 6s. 3d., and so forth.

PRESENT FROM THE QUEEN TO MRS. DAVIS, LATE MISS BONETTA FORBES.—The marriage will be remembered, at St. John's Church, some time ago, of the young African princess, Miss Bonetta Forbes, the protégée of the Queen, who was brought into this country by Captain Forbes in H.M.S. Bonetta, from the coast of Africa, and educated by the Rev. John Schön, chaplain of Melville Hospital, Chatham, at the expense of her Majesty, who always took the most lively interest in her welfare, and occasionally had her at Court. On the occasion of the marriage of the young princess to J. Davis, Esq., a coloured West India merchant, who has since settled on the Gold Coast, the Queen took the most lively interest in the event, and made Miss Forbes several handsome wedding presents, all of which were fully described at the time. Intelligence has now been received of a further mark of favour conferred on Mrs. Davis, who has just given birth to a daughter, to whom her Majesty has stood godmother by proxy. At the same time the Queen has presented to her godchild a beautiful gold cup, with a salver, knife, fork and spoon of the same material, as a baptismal present. The cup and salver bear the following inscription:—"To Victoria Davis, from her godmother, Victoria, Queen of Great Britain and Ireland, 1863."



[BURNETT CROWE'S TALE OF THE PAST.]

A YOUNG GIRL FROM THE COUNTRY.

By VANE IRETON ST. JOHN.

Author of "The Queen of Night," "In Spite of the World," &c.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Roderigo.—E'en had I wealth, why should I give to you?

Monk.—Think of the past, and give at least in pity
What you refuse to justice. The Monk.

MANGLES WORSOP was defeated.

He owned it, because it was impossible to deny it; but he owned it with a leer that plainly intimated that the defeat was but a temporary one.

Mrs. Worsop having continued enveloped in her flannel petticoat during Cicely Crowe's flight, had heard nothing of it until she was gone; and not being aware of her reasons for going, was naturally wildly indignant.

"The girl might have told me she was going," she muttered. I don't wonder that your old death's-head frightened her; but I'm sure I was always kind to her, and loved her as my own."

Mangles Worsop was used to compliments of a similar kind from this quarter, and so paid no especial attention to her.

She was the repository of very few of his secrets.

Having a heart somewhere, she was decidedly antagonistic to all his schemes, because Nature had evidently, in constructing him, forgotten to make him a present of one.

John Shadow, at first, believed that Mangles Worsop was deceiving him—that he had spirited the girl away somewhere, and concealed her to serve some purpose of his own.

But at length Mangles Worsop's protestations persuaded him that it was not so.

And what, after all, was John Shadow's grand scheme, in which Cicely Crowe was to act so great a part?

Why was it necessary that he should find her?

Why, but because this ogre, this man of crime, coveted her for himself; in the first place, because her exquisite beauty pleased him; and in the second place because he could in no way revenge himself better upon her father than by making her his wife.

This scheme he would confess to no one; but such was in truth his darling plan, and this was why, when Mangles Worsop told him she was gone, his eyes glared fiercely, and he stormed like one who was mad.

Gradually his anger abated, and his passion cooled. The bad man had other work in progress, and time passed rapidly with him.

Besides chance was his providence.

He believed thoroughly that some day or another, when it best suited his purpose, Cicely Crowe would again cross his path.

So, having found repeated efforts unavailing, he gave up the search for a time.

It was one evening, just as Mangles Worsop was about to close his shop, that a light hand touched him on the shoulder.

It was soft and gentle as that of a girl, and he started round in surprise.

It was not a girl; but a man bent and white with age.

Worsop gazed at him for a moment, to see if he could recognize him, but it was in vain.

"What is it you want?" he said, in no very gentle tone.

The old man smiled sadly.

"You don't know me, then, Worsop?" he said, in a broken voice.

"No, indeed, no. Who are you?"

"Once a friend—Burnett Crowe."

Worsop seized his arm, and drew him into the light, and there was a stronger emotion than that of surprise in his voice, as he exclaimed, grasping his hand:

"Why, Burnett, man, how you are altered. I should not have known you."

The old man sat down feebly on a box.

"Time has changed me," he said; "but I've had an accident, and that has made me still more feeble."

"Yes," said Worsop, "I heard you were dead."

"They thought I should die; but I wouldn't let them tell any one where I was until I was better. How is Cicely?"

Mangles Worsop averted his head.

He feared to tell the old man his child was gone—feared more lest he should learn that it was through fear of his vile schemes she had fled.

"Tell me, Worsop," cried Burnett Crowe excitedly; "tell me where is Cicely?"

"She is not with us," said Worsop, with a kind of jerk of courage, "she's gone, clean gone, run away."

Burnett Crowe rose from his seat with his eyes wildly distended, his hands clutching at vacancy.

He could scarcely credit his misfortune.

"Gone," he cried, "where?"

Worsop shook his head.

"I don't know."

"And why? tell me that!" cried Burnett; "you

must have ill-used her, Worsop, or she would not have fled."

"I never ill-used her, I never used a harsh word," said the antiquary; "she ran away one night with a low fellow whom I had about the place to fetch errands."

Burnett Crowe was so confounded, so utterly overwhelmed by the intelligence, that for some time his sorrow did not give way. But at length the full reality of the misfortune presented itself to him, and he burst into a passionate flood of tears.

"Oh, my child! my poor dear child!" he cried, "where is she, where is she?"

"I cannot help you there," said the antiquary, as he proceeded to close his shop. "I have not the remotest clue. I followed her; I sought for her everywhere, in vain. I have done my best to recover her, and all the reward I receive is to be told that I have ill-used her."

Burnett Crowe wrung his hands.

"No, no; forget I said that," he cried. "Poor Cicely, poor Cicely! And I, too, am ruined; I have no means of seeking for her. I have been to Thornton; my school is gone, my very scholars know me not, and another lives in my house. Six months have now passed, remember, since I fell in the street and was picked up for dead. Six months is a long while, and people soon forget a poor, helpless old man."

Mangles Worsop answered not, but mentally tied up his purse-strings.

"I must go after her," pursued Crowe. "I must wander through the world, but I must find her. Yet how am I to do it? I am poor, friendless, and unable to work."

Worsop was still silent.

"Worsop," cried Crowe, "lend me ten pounds."

The antiquary started as if shot.

"Ten pounds!" he exclaimed. "I haven't it, indeed no!"

Burnett Crowe smiled bitterly.

"You mean to refuse me," he said quietly.

"No; I have it not!"

"Do not think to deceive me, I know you have it. But come, ere I repeat my request, I will tell you a story. My father, Burnett Crowe (I am named, you see, after him) saved in business the sum of three hundred pounds and invested it in a bank in London."

"What has this to do with me?" said Worsop querulously.

"Much, as you will see. This sum of money he designed for me. It was to start me in life, and was the source of immeasurable pleasure to the good old man. He would pore for hours over his bank-book,

and wonder how he could make it more, and pondering and pondering he would dream of my surprise when he told me of his treasure. Now my father had some enemies, among others, one Ebenezer Langton, a usurer. Like all usurers, he was grasping, avaricious, uncompromising. My father was bound for a friend, and this bond was held by Langton. The bond was for five hundred pounds, and this friend becoming a defaulter, my father found it impossible to meet with the demand.

"But he had the three hundred," cried Worsop, becoming interested.

"Yes, but that was his treasure, his idol; he could not part with that. That was for me, his only son: and to pay Ebenezer Langton with my money, as he called it, seemed like robbery to him. So he paid it into the bank under a fictitious name, that the usurer might not know of it."

"And that name was?"

"Bertram Smith!"

Worsop sprang up, uttering a cry as if he had been wounded.

Crowe smiled quietly,

"Ah!" he said, "my story is beginning to interest you."

"Proceed," returned Worsop gruffly.

"Well, he placed his money in the name of Bertram Smith. At the bank he became acquainted with a young man named John Bennett, and he at last took such a fancy to him that he invited him to his house. The acquaintance grew, and I became John Bennett's intimate and bosom friend—You have dropped your keys, Worsop."

"Thank you!" growled the antiquary.

"John Bennett knew me as Bertram Smith the younger; and, being about the same age, we were very much together, although our tastes were much dissimilar. He was fond of riot and dissipation, and revelry, and though I fell into his ways, and went out with him, and joined him in his extravagant follies, I felt in them none of the enjoyment that he did. One day he came to my father, with a baggard face, and eyes red with weeping or long watching."

"What ails you, my boy?" asked my father.

"He fell on his knees."

"Oh! save me!" he cried.

"Save you!" cried his friend, "why, what have you been doing, John, my boy, that you ask me to save you?"

"Oh! say you will forgive me if I tell you," sobbed the youth.

"Yes, yes, I will. Repentance is worthy of forgiveness, tell me all."

"Oh! Mr. Smith," cried John Bennett, "I have been very, very sinful. I know it, but I was sorely tempted. Six months ago, I met a young girl—far above me in position; I loved her distractedly, but she despised me because I was poor. I was anxious to appear well in her eyes—to seem as if I were possessed of wealth beyond my apparent means, and, in an evil hour, I forged a bill for three hundred and twenty pounds. My employers already suspect me, but they have no proof. If I could meet the bill, I could retrieve my character, but I have not a penny—not a penny!"

"Have you spent all your money, then?" asked my father.

"Yes, all!"

"On what?"

"On jewellery, clothes, horses, carriages—follies, cursed follies of every kind. Oh! save me, Mr. Smith, save me from disgrace! My dear girl will discard me; justice will seize me. I shall be a convicted felon, disgraced, ruined for ever. Oh! save me, and I will faithfully repay you!"

"My father was moved."

"It was a sad thing, Mangles Worsop, to see a young man thus crushed for ever. But then, the three hundred pounds, were they not mine? How could he give them? 'After all,' said he to himself, 'what the eye does not see the heart does not feel,' and Burnett would never know it." So he drew out his three hundred pounds from the bank, and pawned his watch to make up the rest, and John Bennett was saved."

Burnett Crowe paused.

Worsop was deadly pale, and trembling like a leaf.

"Well," he murmured, "what then?"

"Burnett proved ungrateful. He met the bill, saved himself, and disappeared. Many years after I met a man with whom I became intimate. Papers since discovered prove this man to be John Bennett, though the lapse of time had changed us both, so that we did not recognize one another. You are this man—you are John Bennett."

Mangles Worsop eyed him strangely.

Could this man, whitened by age and crushed by misfortune, be the young fellow who had been his friend and companion?

Or was Burnett Crowe telling him a specious tale?

"Well, what think you of my story?" asked the schoolmaster.

"I do not know. I cannot tell what to believe, or why you tell it to me."

Burnett Crowe eyed him sternly.

"I have told you," he said, "because I desire that you will lend me a few pounds, or rather, restore to me a few of those you robbed me of. I know you to be John Bennett, therefore spare yourself the trouble of denying it, and tell me, once for all, will you or will you not lend me ten pounds?"

Mangles Worsop rose and approached his desk.

"Yes," he said, "I will lend them to you."

He opened a box which was full of gold pieces, and, taking out the ten sovereigns, handed them to Burnett Crowe.

The old man eyed the casket of gold wistfully.

"Oh!" he thought, "if I had all that money, I would soon find my Cicely."

"Is Mrs. Worsop well?" he said, after a moment.

"Yes, do you wish to see her?"

"I should like to."

"Stay here, then, a moment," said the antiquary, "and I will go up and see if she can receive you."

He left the shop, and went up the old, creaking stairs.

Mrs. Worsop was in her "sentry-box," with the usual flannel petticoat around her head.

She was in a more than ordinarily somnolent state, however; and it required a considerable amount of shaking to rouse her.

The antiquary was angry.

"Woman!" he cried; "you were born, I think, to be the plague of my life. Here I have been shaking you for an hour and you won't wake."

"My nerves, Worsop! my poor nerves!" exclaimed the lady.

"There's some one down-stairs who wants to see you—old Burnett Crowe, the schoolmaster, come to find his daughter."

"Dear me! ask him up!" cried Mrs. Worsop, as she unfolded herself from her wrappings. "Bless me, how strange! Poor man, he must be very sorry for that girl of his—ungrateful child!"

Mangles Worsop, having roused her to a proper knowledge of the position, then left the room and went down into the shop.

It was in utter darkness, and the street door was open.

"What can this mean?" he cried. "Burnett—Burnett, where are you?"

There was no answer.

With a trembling hand he took the matches from the mantel-piece and relit the gas.

The desk was broken open—the box containing his money gone.

"Fool, fool that I was," he shrieked, "to leave Burnett Crowe here! I am ruined—ruined; the old villain has robbed me!"

Then, hatless as he was, he rushed forth into the street.

CHAPTER XXIX.

He knows her well: they cannot now deceive him—Her eyes, her smile, her very walk proclaim him The child of love long lost.

WITH an exulting heart Burnett Crowe left Little Feather Lane and took his way homewards.

He had now the means of following up a scheme he had long treasured in his heart—that of travelling about the country until chance brought him into contact with some one who could give him news of his daughter.

The accident he had met with had somewhat clouded his intellect; and he felt almost inclined, black night as it was, to start upon his journey at once, and walk from street to street, and town to town, like the fair Saracen of old, calling out the name of the lost one.

Burnett Crowe had taken up his quarters in a street near the Haymarket, and when he reached the corner of that glaring thoroughfare, he found himself almost overwhelmed by the sea of pleasure-seekers who were leaving Her Majesty's Theatre.

It was nearly the last night of the season, and the last appearance for some time of a young singer who had made her *début* that year.

Her name was Constantia Ervelli; but though adopting an Italian name, she was generally supposed to be an English girl.

Her *début* had been triumphant, her voice was rich powerful, melodious; and though she was, evidently, quite unused to the stage, she rapidly learned her positions, and became, towards the end of the season, a universal favourite.

So, on this last night, the theatre was crammed, and the crowd which left the doors at the termination of the opera was dense as well as varied.

Burnett Crowe, arrested by the throng, leaned against a pillar, and gazed in admiration and interest at the faces of the pleasure-seekers.

Could he have hoped in such a crowd—in such a

joyous assemblage—to see the face of the one he had lost?

Ever and anon he would start and gaze fixedly at some lovely girl, who smilingly tripped from the opera to her carriage, leaning on the arm of her admirer, her brother or her father; but no, this one was too fair, that too dark, that too slender, this too coarse.

And so the crowd passed away, and only a few stragglers remained.

Yet Burnett Crowe still lingered.

Presently the door of the theatre again opened, and a young girl emerged by herself.

She hurried across the pavement and entered her carriage quickly.

As she did so the glare of the lamp fell full on her face.

"Oh! God be praised!" exclaimed Burnett Crowe, springing forward; "it is she!"

But the horses had already moved, and as he rushed towards the carriage window, the footman pushed him rudely, and he fell almost beneath the wheels of the carriage.

And so Constantia Ervelli drove rapidly away, while the old man, rising from amid the mud of the street, sat down upon the step and wept.

Suddenly an idea struck him.

He roused himself, and, forgetting how little civility he might expect from hirelings when he was dressed and covered with dirt as he was, he went to the stage-door and spoke to the man who, grumbling and sleepy, was awaiting the departure of the last few followers of the Theatopian art.

"Can you tell me where Miss Cicely Crowe resides?" he said, meekly.

The man eyed him sternly.

"Don't know the name. What is she, a 'ballet'?"

"I cannot say. I saw her just now leaving the door in front. She went in a carriage by herself."

"I tell you, I don't know what you are talking about—there ain't no such person here."

Burnett Crowe thought a moment.

He took out half-a-sovereign and placed it in the man's hand.

"Pray tell me what I ask," he said; "because I have very serious reasons for asking."

"Well," cried the man, quite mollified by this earnest of Crowe's good will—"well, you see, there's no one here of the name of Cicely Crowe—you must have got hold of the wrong name. Can't you give me some description of her?"

Burnett smiled.

Could he give some description of his Cicely? Yes, he could.

And he gave so detailed an account that the man exclaimed:

"Why, that's Constantia Ervelli, the great singer!"

Burnett started.

His heart leaped within him.

Whether it was with joy or fear he could not tell. The feelings were strangely mingled—he felt joy that she was far removed from want—fear lest she should despise her infirm and poverty-stricken father.

Despise him—Cicely despise the being to whom she owed everything—who had ever been her kindest friend, whom she had always loved so well?

It was impossible.

Yet had she not glanced from her carriage window at him; had she not seen him pushed down by the footman, and had she not driven on?

Still it might not be she.

"This Constantia Ervelli is an Italian," he said.

"My daughter—this lady whom I seek, is an English-woman."

The man smiled knowingly.

"Well, they do say she ain't Italian," he said. "If she be, she talks English as well as I."

"Probably better," thought Burnett Crowe.

He added aloud:

"Can you give me any information about her?"

"Well, yes, I can," said the man. "If you'll wait a few minutes till the last of the ballet have gone, I'll take you where we can have a quiet chat."

"I will wait," returned Crowe.

In a few minutes more the theatre was cleared.

The jaded ballet-girls dressed, some neatly, some in tawdry finery, all looking as if another night's exertion would be their death, passed by; and Burnett Crowe shuddered at the question which the man had put to him. Was Cicely Crowe "a ballet?"

At length the stage-door keeper quitted his post, locked up, and left, leading the way towards a little public-house in the neighbourhood, where they had the parlour nearly to themselves.

In spite of the receipt of the half-sovereign, Mr. Dawson—that was his name—suffered Crowe to pay for the drink; smoking his pipe with assumed indifference when the waiter applied for the score.

"Mind," he said, confidentially, "mind, what I'm a going to tell you is hearsay. I ain't had it from the young lady."

"That does not matter, it may give me some clue."
 "Just so. Well, one day, so Mullins told me—and Mullins is ballet-master, and knows a goodish bit—one day, an Italian, named Foscarei, called on Mr. Edmund Taite Smythe, the lessee."
 Mr. Dawson's manner of delivering himself of his story was anything but connected, and so I give the story in my own words.

As far as Burnett Crowe could understand, it appeared that Signor Foscarei, a gentleman who supplied the theatre with all the "talent," had a friend living in some lodging-house on the other side of the water.

Visiting this friend one day, he heard a young girl singing. He listened—her notes were pure, delicious, equal to anything he had ever listened to, and he requested the landlady to introduce him.

He was introduced accordingly, found the young girl in some trouble, and the result of a second interview was that she consented to try her hand at operatic singing.

She had learned music slightly—she had a voice like a nightingale, and in three months was able to make her *début*.

This *début* was a triumphant success, and she soon obtained a large salary. This night was her last appearance for the season at Her Majesty's Theatre.

"And where does she go now?" asked Burnett Crowe, eagerly.

"In the country—to Layston, I believe. She has an engagement at the Theatre Royal."

"Where does she reside in London?"

"With Signor Foscarei and his wife—10, Middleton Street, Pall Mall. That was his carriage which took her from the theatre."

"They are fond of her, then, I presume?"

"Oh, yes! they doat on her—they are so proud of her; they take her to Italy in January."

To Italy!

The old man trembled.

What, if between this time and January, he should fail to find her—what should he do then?

"Does she perform in London again before then?" he asked.

"No."

"And when does she return from Italy?"

"In May."

"Do you know when she starts for Layston?"

"Yes—she starts to-morrow," said Dawson; "you'll excuse me, I know; but you seem mighty anxious about the girl."

"Well, I am," returned Burnett Crowe, wiping the perspiration from his brow, "I am."

"May be you're looking for her for a friend of hers?"

"Yes—yes—a great friend—her father."

Dawson eyed him fixedly.

"Well, now, if I may make bold to ask," he said, after a minute, "are you her father?"

The word "yes," rushed towards Crowe's lips, but there it stopped.

Why should the ragged, wretched old man claim relationship with the successful, beautiful singer—why should he make her the talk of the pettifoggers behind the scenes—why should he raise a scandal, when by keeping silent, he might leave her to her brilliant career?

It was clear to him that if this Constantia Ervelli was his daughter, Cicely, she believed him dead. Yet, had she made no inquiries? had she left his fate in doubt? had she gone on in her splendid career without once endeavouring to solve the problem of his disappearance?

What right had he to think this? None; so he drove the idea from his mind, and resolved to draw no conclusions till he was satisfied there were grounds to proceed on.

Little did he know of what had occurred.

He knew no one—saw no one—never even glanced at a paper—how could he know that, day after day, an advertisement had appeared for him?

How could he know, too, how a lady in a carriage had called at the hospital, and tried to obtain a clue however slight, to the whereabouts of the old man who had met with the accident on the night mentioned by Mangles Worsop to John Shadow?

"No," said Burnett Crowe, resolutely. "I am not the father of Constantia Ervelli. I wish I were. Good-night, my friend, you have done me a great service."

"Good-night," returned Dawson, "if ever you want any more information, come to me, and if I have any to give, depend on it you shall have it."

When Burnett Crowe left the tavern, it was approaching morning, although, owing to the lateness of the season, it was still dark.

Pleasure-seekers, and workers too, had nearly deserted the streets, and only a few stragglers and policemen were to be seen.

To go to his daughter's house at that time of night would be madness.

He would be spurned as a madman, a beggar, or a thief, and driven away.

Hurrying home, therefore, he threw himself upon his bed, dressed as he was, to snatch a short repose.

He had had an evening of excitement and fatigue, and his weak frame was unable to bear up against it.

The sun was high in the heavens, therefore, when he awoke and remembered his day's task.

He rang the bell, and the slatternly servant answered.

"What is the time?" he asked.

"Half-past eleven. Will you have any breakfast, sir?"

"Breakfast!" growled Burnett Crowe, "no—I will neither eat nor sleep till I find my daughter. What is my bill?"

"I will see, sir. I'll be up in a moment."

Crowe did not wait for her to come up; he ran down as if he were a young man—paid his bill and rushed into the street.

A cab took him quickly to 10, Middleton Street.

He jumped out before it had stopped, and knocked eagerly.

"Is the Signora Ervelli within?" he asked in nervous haste.

"No, sir; she left an hour since."

Burnett Crowe stamped his foot with impatience.

"That cursed delay!" he said, while the footman gazed at him in bewilderment; "what a fool—a silly old fool I was to sleep, when work had to be done. Can you tell me where she is gone?"

"She has gone to Layston—to the 'Theatre Royal,'" said the footman.

"Thank you," returned Burnett Crowe, as he moved away.

"Will you leave your card, sir?" asked the man, who was somewhat anxious to know who this person was, who came ill-dressed in a cab, and said such queer things.

"Card! bless me, I have none!" said the school-master. "You will remember my name, perhaps—Burnett Crowe—thank you. Good morning."

He then dismissed his cab, and entering a coffee-house sat down to collect his thoughts over his breakfast.

It was quite certain, that whatever might be the feelings of Cicely towards him, the Italian family, who had taken so great a fancy to her, would not approve of her acknowledging a poor ragged fellow as her father.

He therefore resolved at once to obtain new clothes, notwithstanding the outlay it would necessitate.

"What shall I require money for?" he said.

"When I reach Layston I shall see my dear child, and for a time, at least, I shall be able to live, at any rate, until I can look round for something."

Accordingly, newly clothed and "dressed up," as he expressed it, Burnett Crowe started by the two o'clock train for Layston, which he hoped to reach at five.

CHAPTER XXX.

A still smaller voice it whispers him—

A cloud falls o'er his heart:

What if upon that night of dread

They met, and met to part?

What if the one he longs to see

The tenant of that tomb should be?

And his the hand whose coward blow

Had stilled his voice for ever?

Lennox.

BEFORE I proceed to relate the journey of Burnett Crowe to Layston, and to describe the bitter trial which awaited him, I must turn for a while to other personages of my story—personages who soon will be found treading the same highway as the old man and his child—sharing their trials, their joys, and their sorrows.

It will be remembered that, in his interview with the Marquis of Castleton, John Shadow had said:

"In a week you shall see your son!"

As far as John Shadow was concerned this might have been accomplished.

But fate had ordained it otherwise.

Two days after this interview, the marquis received a letter informing him that a dear friend, then residing in the South of England, was on the point of death, and desired earnestly to see him.

This friend was a lady, one whom he had been commissioned by his father never to lose sight of.

She was, in fact, the daughter of a woman whom Mr. Conyers, senior, had loved, and she was, within a few months, the same age as the marquis.

This sacred trust he had neglected to perform.

Their paths in life had differed.

She had married a man of wealth—one who had made his money by trade, and from this moment she and Milton Conyers rarely met.

Determined, therefore, to go at once to her in her last moments, he felt himself in this dilemma:

How was he to communicate to John Shadow?

How was he to let him know his reasons for leaving town, or the place to which he was going, when John Shadow had refused to leave his address?

There was no one in whom he could confide—at least, so he imagined.

How changed everything would have been, had he known that under that very roof lived his once-loved Laura—the woman he had so greatly injured—the woman whom he had believed to have died, sad and alone, in the consciousness of innocence yet under the ban of the guilty!

Oh, could he have known that she was then still living; ready to forgive all—ready to forget all—so that she might have the privilege of saving him!

In this dilemma he sent for Jacob Messenger.

Old Jacob, he knew could be trusted.

"Jacob," said the Marquis, "I have a delicate commission to give you."

"I shall endeavour to do my best with it, my lord," returned Jacob, bowing.

"There is a letter for Mr. Edward Courtenay," pursued Lord Castleton; "you know him well—he has often visited the marchioness. I wish this letter to be delivered to him the first time he comes—but remember, it must be delivered privately."

"Yes, my lord."

"What I mean by privately is that no one but you and I must know of it."

"Yes, my lord."

Jacob Messenger went away petrified.

"Well, I never!" he muttered; "my lord, after all, knows all about him. Well, well—it ain't none of my business."

So the marquis left London for a few days, to visit Mrs. Davis Loughly at Brighton.

He found her dying.

She received him as one old friend does another, after many, many years; and thanked him eagerly for coming.

He had not been with her long, before her doctor ordered her to visit the South of France.

This is generally a death-warrant. When your doctor tells you to go to the South of France, be assured that the physician's skill is useless, and that he despairs of saving you.

The marquis scarcely expected to be asked to accompany her thus, as it were, to her grave; but dying people are selfish sometimes; and, in spite of the story he told her of his son's strange recovery, she entreated him to go with her.

"I have no other friend in the world," she said, "excepting my daughter and that Mrs. Markham you see here. My daughter cannot leave her family; Mrs. Markham is little better than a nurse. Your voice and your face recall to me my youth and happy days. I shall not keep you long from England. Besides, you are ill yourself. By the time you are called upon to bury me you will have restored yourself to health. Your son is young. He will live. He shall inherit my fortune."

So the marquis went.

The time sped by more quickly than he dreamed of. Four months passed, and Mrs. Davis Loughly died; and the marquis turned back on his way home, renewed in health and strength.

The balmy breezes of Southern France, and the genial sun, and, more than all, the absence of the deadly poison which had begun to work into his blood, soon wrought a change in a constitution naturally vigorous; and, as he stepped on board the steamer which was to bring him from Calais to Dover, he could not help mentally exclaiming:

"Mrs. Loughly was right. I am restored to health. When I reach home, and live again amid home influences, shall I keep this health?"

Meanwhile the Marchioness of Castleton chafed at home.

The continued absence of the marquis entirely upset her plans; and she saw, looming in the future, an endless path of sorrow and fear.

"Yet why should I give way to dread?" she would murmur to herself, as each week passed by without bringing her husband home. "The marquis is old—he is upwards of sixty—his health is impaired. He cannot live much longer, to be my bane and my terror."

John Shadow communicated with her but little. The marquis being absent, everything was at a standstill, and Shadow did not care to implicate himself too much with Lady Isabel, now that her husband was, to a certain extent, his friend.

He had received Lord Castleton's letter from Jacob Messenger, and, knowing his address, therefore, wrote to him, explaining further the proofs of his son's identity.

The greatest proof of all he omitted, because he dared not name it.

To Madame Delaume he had promised an interview with Granby Saville.

This interview she had.

What a trial this was to her mother's heart none but herself could tell.

His voice, his features, his actions—all seemed to bring back to her the child she had lost five-and-twenty years before, and her eyes filled with tears, and her accents faltered as she spoke to him.

Then, by Shadow's directions, Granby Saville, wondering what all this meant, rolled up his sleeve, and there, just above the elbow, were the marks of two burns—running exactly parallel and deeply imbedded.

Madame Delaume would have fallen, had not John Shadow supported her.

"Take me hence!" she murmured, "I cannot bear this trial."

He drew her into the next room, motioning back the young man who would have followed, leaving him pale, agitated, wondering, full of vague hopes and alarms.

"What means this?" cried John Shadow, as the trembling woman sank into a chair, "is that man your son?"

Yes—yes; he is my son; he is my own Ralph. Oh! I could not bear to look upon him longer without clasping him in my arms. Oh, Heaven! in mercy grant that I may soon be able to speak to him, and tell him of all the love which has been pent up in my heart for years.

John Shadow gazed at her aghast.

If this man was her son indeed, who was that one who lay cold and dead in the still vault at Thornton?

He cast to him, however, the horrible suspicion.

"But," he said, "why should I suffer myself to be moved thus? This woman raves—her sorrow has made her mad. If this be your son," he added, "how do you recognize him?"

"By that mark on his arm—by that double burn. Ask the marquis if he recollects it not? It was when he was an infant, that, playing in my dressing-room, he drew from the fire a pair of hot curling-irons, and fell upon them as he toddled across the floor. The lines are parallel—look at them; speak to my husband of them, and he will tell you I am telling nothing but the truth. Besides, his eyes, his features, are all unchanged—he is my son, my dear, dear son!"

"Hush, woman!" cried John Shadow, savagely, "do you want him to hear? Do you wish to ruin all?"

Madame Delaume eyed him sternly.

"Better language, John Shadow," she said, "better language; remember, you know I am innocent, and to you I have a name."

Shadow knew it was at that moment dangerous to offend her.

"I beg your pardon, Madame Delaume," he said, "for so it is safest for me, at present, to address you; but if you were at present to recognize your son, you would upset the whole plan which I have for years been forming. Have a little patience, madam, and all will go well."

"I cannot see what harm I could do," she answered; "all seems perfectly straightforward. I recognize my son—you explain to the marquis my innocence—I am reconciled to him, and prove to him the identity of my dear Ralph. You would be amply rewarded and all would end well. What can you desire more?"

How simple, truly!

All the plots of villany and deceit, all the errors of foolish passion, rendered null, and swept away by the mere proclamation of the truth!

Why did he not accept this offer?

Why did he not allow this woman to be restored at once to her husband's love and to her son?

Because there was firmly rooted in his mind the conviction that Granby Saville was his own son, and that when proclaimed heir to the marquise, he would be able to draw unlimited resources and be under the dominion of his real father.

"You do not understand my plans," he said; "their fulfilment is absolutely necessary to me—they will do no injury to you."

Madame Delaume sighed.

"I am in your power," she said, rising, "I must bide my time. Let me go now, for I cannot remain here longer without rushing into that room. Farewell!"

She walked to the door, extending no hand.

John Shadow opened it, and preceded her to the street entrance.

There he stopped her.

He put his hand on her arm gently, reprovingly, deprecatingly.

"Silence," he said, "and prudence!"

"I have promised both."

"Good!" he said, "then all will be well."

She then departed, and he returned to Granby Saville. The young man was anxiously awaiting him.

As Shadow entered, he grasped his arm.

"Who is that woman?" he said.

"A governess at Lord Castleton's."

"But why that mummy?"

"She knew you when you were quite a child," returned Shadow.

"And can she recognize me?"

"She does—by those marks on your arm."

Granby smiled.

"Then Lady Castleton lied—I am Ralph Conyers."

John Shadow did not answer.

Granby Saville walked to the window, and looked out, leaving him to his thoughts.

Their visions at this moment—how different were they!

The one saw before him a bright, sunny face—the face of one whom he had loved for years, and which he would soon call his own.

The other saw a cold, blood-stained, pallid face before him.

A face which had at one moment nothing in it but the features of an enemy!

The face of one cruelly murdered on the very threshold of hope!

The face of a being who, if he was not Ralph Conyers, must be John Shadow's son.

And so John Shadow mused for a long time, until his thoughts wandered back many—many years—to days and spots long forgotten or set aside.

At length, struck by a sudden idea, he sprang up.

"Granby," he said, "I want to leave London for a few days."

Granby walked from the window and sat down.

"Well," he said, "and what then?"

"I'm an odd man," added Shadow, "and you know that."

"I do."

"Well, I shall go to-night. You'll find money in my desk if you require it. You'll have plenty of society, as the Mansfields and the Humes are both in town, and Mrs. Edwins too, will be happy to see you." "When will you be back?"

John Shadow mused again.

"Well," he said, at length, "I cannot say. But at any rate, that does not matter to you. Nothing is to be done until the marquis returns, and I don't expect him home just yet."

In ten minutes after this he was dressed and ready to go; and, taking leave of Granby Saville, went off, with no other luggage but his light carpet-bag.

Granby Saville leaned out of the window.

"That is an odd man," he said; "a strange conglomeration of good and evil. Yet he seems to have a distinct being from all other mortals—he seems like his own name, noiseless, stealthy, dark. I should know him among a thousand."

Meanwhile Shadow passed on rapidly towards the railway terminus, where trains started for Thornton.

At the corner of the second street was a police-station.

Before this a crowd was collected.

John Shadow stopped.

He had an interest in everything connected with crime.

A fresh placard had been pasted up.

It offered a reward of £50 for the apprehension of a thief, and gave an accurate description of him.

John Shadow chuckled, and went on his way rejoicing.

The name of the thief, whose arrest justice demanded, was Burnett Crowe.

(To be continued.)

EDUCATION IN THE NAVY.—Lord Clarence Paget took the occasion of the election of a new mayor for Deal to make a speech to his constituents. He spoke, of course, of his own department, and said that in a few years all the sailors would be educated men, the boys with whom the navy is filling being all able to read and write. The naval reserve was increasing fast, and now included 18,000 very excellent men, and 150 officers, "the cream of the merchant service;" while as to ironclads the Admiralty thought it right, amidst a hail of suggestions, to decide on their own responsibility.

THE PRINCE CONSORT'S LOST ANCHOR.—A Dublin letter of recent date states that the anchor and chain lost by the Prince Consort when she entered the man-of-war roads at Kingstown have been discovered by the pinnace of the Ajax. The "dragging" for them had been going on for a whole week, and no sooner were their whereabouts ascertained than a diver was sent down to attach a hawser to them. The chain and anchor are valued at about £800. This diver has proved a very useful person about Kingstown and Dublin. He can descend into the deepest water, and remain a long time below, without using even a diving-bell. After dressing in thick and warm waterproof clothes, and being heavily weighted to make him sink, he dons a great head-piece of copper with large glass eyes. Two flexible tubes are afterwards attached to this head-piece—the one to convey fresh air down to him from the pump, the other to carry away the foul air and keep up the current. He is then ready to descend. The Holyhead mail-steamers were, until lately, regularly dry docked in Dublin to have their bottoms scraped; but now this diver performs the operation at less cost, and without removing

them from Kingstown. During the late gale, too, he stopped a leak in a large foreign vessel, which was nearly sinking off Kingstown, and enabled her to make the port.

THE OVERFLOW OF THE NILE.—The railway is in full activity, and is bringing from 4,000 to 6,000 bales of cotton a week into our market. The loss by the inundation is estimated at from 20,000 to 25,000 bales, which is comparatively little, if we remember the mischief done in 1861, when the Nile did not rise so high nor remain so long stationary. The cattle-disease has, unfortunately, broken out again, and, according to official reports, over 500,000 head have been lost; it has also begun to attack the newly-imported cattle, which at first appeared to be safe. The Viceroy has, we hear, lost all the oxen she got from the Red Sea.

THE THREE ROSES.

CHAPTER XL.

THE SECRET CRIME CONTINUED.

ON reaching our destination, he changed his name, dyed his hair, and remained quiet, till one day I saw the advertisement of a reward of five hundred pounds offered for the apprehension of a forger, to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, and the name of that forger was Augustus Upham, of Rock House. I was not given to fainting, screaming, weeping, paleness, or any other interesting feminine tremors. I think that grief, fear, mortification, every feeling, was lost in a storm of unutterable scorn and anger. He just then hurried into the room, and met my eyes, flashing with a consuming wrath, no doubt, for I felt so—for I was never either a weak or a weak woman, brother—and we should no doubt have had a terrible scene, but that he, who had seen the advertisement, fearing to trust too much to his disguise and change of name, had come in to hasten our departure. We travelled again. He had a very large amount of money with him. I think that, before he fled, he had taken time to draw all his money from the various banks in which it had been, from time to time, temporarily deposited. I think, also, that he had placed the arrangement of his business in the hands of one of his comrades, who remained behind, and who also cheated him, in refutation of the adage which tells us there is 'honour among thieves.' The forgery—you heard of it, my brother?"

"Never; nor is it strange that I should not. Few papers reach our secluded neighbourhood, and those few are weeklies, from which all unnecessary matter is expunged; besides, I was indebted for my reading of newspapers to Roland Mildred, and it is probable that had the advertisement or any notice of the forgery appeared in our papers, he would have carefully withheld them, and concealed it from me. You must know, also, that though I constantly thought of you, dear Amelia, I never spoke of you. As for the forgery, things of that sort follow each other with such lamentable rapidity, that a new instance quickly supplants an old one in public thought."

"Yes, that is so," my sister said, and then continued:

"For two or three years, he had a very large sum of money, as I said, and made a great deal more; and so we lived in style. I saw victim after victim ensnared and lost. I never ceased to expostulate with him; and, where another and a gentler woman would have wept, I upbraided. It was my nature to quarrel rather than to cry. And he would, sometimes, when I had, in my utter scorn of his courses, said something to him almost too plain and bitter ever to be forgiven, gaily attribute it to my 'red hair,' and laughingly caress me. Ah! it was because he was such a splendid fellow, ruined, that, in spite of his gigantic faults, I loved him so passionately, quarrelled with him so fiercely, and would have reformed him violently, since it was not in me to do it gently. Ah, yes, he was a magnificent failure, a splendid ruin! He had no faults towards me. He had no infidelity towards me. In all our married life, he was faithful to me—in thought as in deed. I know and feel it. Notwithstanding all our fierce contentions, he loved me through all. He loves me still; grey-haired, haggard as I am—while he, though older, retains all his pristine strength and beauty, he loves me still. Though at last I have abandoned him, he loves me still. He will love me ever—he will come here to seek me. He had magnanimity towards me. When we have quarrelled violently, and I, in the very frenzy of anger, at seeing one I loved so well acting so wrongly, have said words no other man on earth could have forgotten or forgiven, he has freely forgiven them, laying them all upon the scapegoat—the 'red hair.'"

"And did these contests always end so quietly?" I asked, recollecting what had been told me of "personal violence." "Did these affrays always end so quietly?"

Her pale face flushed over.

"Alas, no! How could it be so? Generally, indeed, my bitterest reproaches were met with a caress, or, at worst with a jest, and his word in rejoinder would be 'Red-hair;' but there were times when, under the influence of wine, he would cruelly abuse me. These instances were rare, and followed by a bitterness of regret and self-reproach on his part, that I never knew him to feel for any other act. He ever seemed to think that he could never do enough to convince me of his sorrow. He would tell me, what indeed I knew from my experience of him, that intoxication generally metamorphosed a person, totally reversing, for the time being, the natural disposition; making the naturally ill-tempered good-humoured and gentle, and exciting the good-natured and cheerful to irritability and anger. I could easily forgive him all his abuse of me. It was, at worst, only a piece of savage human nature to strike when angry. Alas, there are more disgraceful things than that in civilization, and for those things I continued to disagree with him. In this way we led a wretched life, certainly, though we were too strongly attached to each other to separate. He took me with him, opposing his manner of life all the time, in all his tramps through the country; and I, in spite of every inconvenience, was very willing to go. I think when people quarrel and part, there is certainly no love at bottom. We quarrelled like two very bad children or two tigers, loving each other dearly between the times. Yes, positively, we quarrelled until, not our love, but the meaning of words was worn out with constant use, and the abuse meant nothing. You and others will think we were very wrong to contend so. Our quarrels, at least, were of my getting up. I could not patiently see him go on as he did, even though I should reap the benefit; neither could I leave him upon any account. I, of course, had nothing to do with his wrong-doing, unless my constant and unremitting opposition was 'aiding and abetting' the unlawful enterprise. Yet I was positively better contented when equally sharing all his bad luck. We had another child—a little girl that lived a whole year, and grew very dear to her father; and to me she was a treasure and a consolation beyond value. I lost her in the second summer, and then my health failed.

"Thirteen years had now passed since our marriage.

"We lived under another name, in various places, for four or five years. I had, in the course of those years, two other children—little angels, who seemed to have just flitted through this world on their swift way to heaven. Look, my hair is quite grey, and I am, you know, but forty-two. We led a tramping, vagrant life. Now he would be joined to a gang of counterfeiters—new one of a company of travelling gamblers. In all his tramps I was by his side, often the only female in a gang of from six to twenty men; always exposed to rudeness, often to insult. He would not permit me to remain behind, nor would I have consented to stay. I was ever by his side, frequently expostulating, opposing, upbraiding. You would have thought, in so many years of opposition, that I would have grown weary of the task and abandoned it: not so. I had an untiring spirit; though always his companion, I was never his accomplice!

"Within the last few years his temper had become very gradually soured and irritable; his habits of intoxication increased fearfully upon him. I suffered often and fruitfully from his violence of anger and frequent drunkenness.

"We were with a gang of coiners, when I made the discovery that I should probably bring another babe into the world, to perish from want and exposure. He and his gang were travelling in a caravan, in the guise of harmless peasants. Many miles of fatiguing travel, many days of anxiety and nights of sleeplessness and exposure, had at last made me so ill that I was obliged to stop. They left me in a woodman's cottage. He left me my trunk and a considerable sum of money—all that he himself had, and as much more as he could wrest from the reluctant pockets of his comrades. He gave me in charge of the woodman and his wife, exhorting them to take the greatest possible care of me, and promising munificent pay when he should return in a month.

"He took leave of me with visible reluctance, returning again and again to press a kiss upon my feverish brow, and to repeat his charges and his adieux. As for his comrades, I believe they would have been glad, only that they must have regretted the loss of their cook and seamstress. A few days' rest and peace restored me—I was up in a week. Oh! I cannot make you understand how highly I appreciated the quiet, secluded sacredness of that little humble family circle—the honest, hard-working woodman and his industrious wife, and their aged parents, and their young children, supported by their hard but honest work. I, who had lived for nearly twenty years a vagrant, wandering life, the strolling companion of counterfeiters and blacklegs, it seemed

to me like heaven to be there—peace was falling on my spirit. Strange, though this was my first parting with my husband, and though I had always dreaded such a parting above all things, yet now I did not feel it very painfully; every painful feeling was lost in a sense of peace and rest, a feeling of cessation from evil doing. Impossible, my brother, to make you or any one else comprehend, who has not experienced it. After that, I began actually to dread the coming of Augustus, and my forcible reunion with the band. I began to wish ardently for some quiet, secluded place, where I could give life to my baby in safety, and rear it in peace, perchance in goodness.

"You know that I was always impulsive, impetuous. Well, I formed the sudden resolution of returning home—returning here. For me to make a resolve is to execute it. I wrote a letter to my husband, explaining my reason for leaving—packed my trunk—liberally paid the woodman and his wife for their care of me—and the day before my husband was expected to reappear again on his way, I left. I believe our boats passed each other, as I was going up the river and he down. Well, I arrived here about six weeks since. Old Jane and Tom did not at first know me, but they soon recognized me. I have not been happy since I came, however. The foreshadowing gloom of approaching death darkens over my spirit. I feel that I shall not survive my child; I feel so more than ever to-night. My brother, promise that you will stay with me till all is over. It will not be many days, perhaps not many hours."

"I promise! but, dear Amelia, do not give way to such thoughts; your first half of life has been very wretched; that is a sure earnest that the latter half will be blessed and happy. No long life is miserable from youth to age, and yours will not be."

"If I live—I believe you. No life was ever wretched from youth to old age, and mine will not be—if I live. But I shall not live, my brother; I feel it. Bear with me."

At that moment a sheet of intense and blinding lightning flashed forth, filling the scene with insufferable radiance, followed by a clap of thunder, whose report seemed to shake the foundations of the earth. The storm that had been gathering all this time, had now broken out with fury. Amid the rattling and rolling of the thunder, was heard a loud resounding crash, and a heavy, continuous, tumbling fall. Some part of the old building had been struck, and was tumbling down. Amelia was pale, but self-possessed. I seized my stick, and ran out to see the amount of the damage done. A broad sheet of lightning illuminated the landscape, and showed me a wing of the old house in ruins. While gazing on it, a wild shriek arose amid the storm, and rang through the house. Another—and another!—each more despairing than the preceding. I rushed into the house, staff in hand, forced open the door of the sitting-room, where I had left my sister, and there I found her, struggling fiercely in the strong, rude grasp of a tall, dark, iron-framed man, with the most diabolical countenance I ever saw. I saw her carried off, helpless, in his arms. I lost my senses. I threw myself on him furiously with the uplifted stick, shouting, or trying to shout: 'Put her down!' and the next thing I recollect, my victim was lying dead before me, and the stick had fallen from my hand. I missed Amelia; she was not there—I did not know where she was gone, I did not care. I saw nothing but the dead victim before me; I felt nothing but blood-guiltiness and terror, and this was so extreme, that I turned deadly sick, dizzy, and blind; my knees smote together, and I shook with an icy coldness. I cared not for my sister now; I cared for nothing, thought of nothing, saw nothing, felt nothing but the terror that was within, and the terror that was before me. I thought I had the nightmare. I smote my temple hard with my doubled fist. I bit the ends of my fingers to wake myself up. I tried to shout, but the words died inarticulately in my throat. I was smothering, suffocating. I struggled, shuddered, partially recovered, still as one under the influence of somnambulism. I picked up my victim, and hurried through the tremendous storm toward the bay. Oh! how ghastly the green, pale face of that corpse shone in the terrible flashes of lightning! How I prayed—how I tried to wake up! I hurried toward the tempestuous bay. Dark as the sky was above, the waters of the bay were luminous as with a phosphorescent light, and rolled toward the shore like a sea of greenish fire. I lifted my victim aloft with a giant's strength; and as I prepared to hurl him into the wild waters below, I thought I should surely start and wake. That was a crisis in the horrid dream that must arouse me. As I threw the corpse in I heard the plunge, saw the tempestuous and fiery waters open, sparkle, flash, and close; and the horrible, the seeming dream, passed into insensibility.

When I awoke, the rising sun was shining broadly across the morning landscape—the herbage was all glittering, sparkling with dew—and the bay flashing

in the sunlight, brightly, gladly, as if it had never felt a storm, or opened and closed over a murdered corpse. I was dripping wet, and fearfully confused in intellect; a vague horror was resting heavily on my soul, which I could neither shake off nor interpret. Gradually, as recollection returned, I experienced a sickening terror, but at first not remorse. I felt as though I had been cheated into the perpetration of a crime while in a fit of somnambulism, indignation and terror—the feeling of a deluded, entrapped man who had still something more to fear—the feeling of a victim, not of an injurer, possessed me. All this time I was getting upon my feet and tottering toward the house. I entered like a culprit, half-insane. I had a vague intention of finding out my sister, and seeing how much she might know of the transactions of the night, which were by this time taking quite a distinct form in my memory. I entered the house—two or three old servants were in the wide passage—some knew me and saluted me. I thought they would wonder at my soiled wet clothing, but they did not appear to notice it; they were indeed taken up with a matter of far more importance. I passed them, and entered the sitting-room; there I saw two women who had lived in the neighbourhood; they had known me as a young man; they recognized and spoke to me. I inquired for my sister; they looked at me with eyes full of pity, and one of them conducted me up-stairs and into a chamber, where I found a group of poor neighbours gathered around a bed upon which my sister lay—dying. On the lap of one of the women near her lay a new-born infant. When Amelia turned her dying eyes on me, they pleaded so plainly, 'Come to me, my brother,' that I made my way through the neighbours, and stood by the side of her bed. Still her eyes were turned pleadingly to mine, and I bent my ear down low to catch her faintly whispered words.

"It was Augustus who was here last night."

I nodded—I had not been certain of it before.

"Where is he?"

I shook my head. She looked earnestly at me, and then turned her failing eyes towards her child. I raised it, and laid it before her. She fixed her eyes in silence upon its little face, and then raised them, eloquent with love and pleading, to my face. I stooped down again, to give her an opportunity of whispering:

"You will adopt her as your own?"

"Yes, I will, indeed I will."

"You will educate her yourself?"

"Yes, indeed I will."

"In the Protestant faith?"

"You still believe that faith to be true?"

"Yes. And desire my child to embrace it."

This little conversation had exhausted her. She lay silent a long time. She signed for her babe to be placed near her face—was raised, and kissed it—then fell back. She did not speak much after that. She died within an hour.

Did I grieve for the lost sister—found at night, to be lost in the morning? No, oh, no! something far heavier than any grief oppressed me. Perfect memory had returned, and filled me with corroding remorse, which I have borne ever since. My sister's funeral took place on the fourth day. My appearance there (I mean in that neighbourhood,) was so natural that it caused no gossip, even in a gossiping community. Augustus Upham's sudden arrival and sudden disappearance, were evidently unknown. I placed my little niece out to nurse in the neighbourhood—again shut up the house, and returned to All Saints with death in my soul. It was not till I found myself again in my comfortable library at home, among my books and papers, that I realized to the utmost the terrible thing that had happened to me. My hair turned perfectly white in a week. "See how he loved his sister!" said my kind and confiding parishioners—but they were wide of the truth. Amelia, alas! much as I had loved her, deeply as under other circumstances I should have mourned for her, I thought not of her now; every affection, every emotion was swallowed up in one absorbing remorse. At the end of two years I went and brought back with me my little niece, Margaret; whom I named after our mother, at my sister's request. I even took her the more as a satisfaction to the manes of the father, than as a memorial of love for the mother. Ah, no feeling, none, could divide the empire of my soul with the one possessing, absorbing, consuming remorse. She keeps that alive—she has not one look of her mother—she has the very features and complexion of her father. His countenance laughs out to me from his child's face. Years—years of utter misery, have passed. Oh, often have I wished that accident might reveal that guilt which I lacked the moral courage to confess. And yet, with strange inconsistency, at the slightest chance of discovery, I would turn sick with terror. In such unutterable sufferings had passed many years, when the evil destiny of the neighbourhood sent Jessie Appleton here. Until her arrival, I had supposed my dreadful secret confined to my own

burning soul. Soon after her arrival, for purposes best known to herself, she particularly sought my acquaintance, and my ear in every—in every company where we met. An inexplicable look of Augustus in her face sickened me from the first.

"Yet she is not at all like Margaret, whom you assert to be the image of him."

"Both are; and yet, as you say, they are not at all like each other. But it is not unusual. Take the face of almost any of your acquaintances—observe how different—how opposite it appears at sundry times—yet you are so familiar with this change, that it does not strike you. But notice again, there may be two children of the same parent strikingly like the parent, yet totally unlike each other. Resemblances do not lie alone in features, complexion, or even expression; but in the curves and lines of the spaces between the features to which the habitual spirit gives a character. It is in this instance as though Maggie, with her father's complexion and features, had inherited her mother's spirit, which gives them character. It is as if Jessie, with some one else's features and complexion, had caught a similar spirit to that of Augustus. Or, to make my meaning still more clear—suppose that at birth a human being becomes possessed of a good and an evil spirit, (or inclination) and that he transmits these in turn to his children. If Maggie and Jessie had been sisters—both closely resembling their parent—in Maggie would predominate the good spirit, in Jessie the evil."

"May they not possibly have been half-sisters?"

"Preposterous! Jessie is the child of William Appleton, a poor Irish gentleman, of good descent, and of Mary Mildred, a distant relative of Roland Mildred. They were married about three years after—after—after that fatal night upon the bay. Jessie was born the second year of their marriage, five years after the—the death—well, the murder of Augustus," said the old man, shuddering. He continued: "She, Jessie, knew my secret, by what inexplicable circumstance I do not know. She, by dark but alarming hints, discovered to me that she knew my crime. She used her knowledge as a constant terror to me—used it as a handle by which to wield the great and unmerited influence I held over my wealthiest parishioners. By that means she grew into the favour and affections of Mrs. and Miss Redclyffe—of Roland Mildred and his family; by that means she obliged me to perform the marriage rites between Charles and Janet Staunton; by that means she held me inactive when I would have mediated between the parent and the child; by that means she won through me the high esteem of Captain Houghton, before she allured his love; by that means she brought about all the misery that has befallen us; her object, the possession of the Limes property—her end, to be caught and killed in her own trap. A hundred times I have, of late, been on the point of this revelation; a hundred times have paused, as much from horror of overwhelming affliction the Redclyffes, who love me as a father, and of killing outright, old Mrs. Mildred, my friend for fifty years, who never, never could survive the shock of the discovery, and all the terrific train of events that must ensue. Why do I at last confess? at last, when my safety seems otherwise secured by the death of my only foe? This, then, is the reason: I feel the near approach of death—so certainly, that there can be no doubt. I am sure I shall never rise from this bed; far less live to meet the exposure, the disgrace, the scorn of esteemed friends, the arrest, trial, condemnation, scaffold—all that appalled me through life—making me bear what I truly believe now to be the greater punishment—unmerited love and veneration, secret remorse."

"My dear friend, you have, with the exception of that one sin, lived a most exemplary life. Who so self-denying, so prayerful, so charitable as you?"

"Alas! it might deceive the world—it never comforted me!"

"Father, do you know that the only fault you have to reproach yourself with, after all, is the fault of which men least like to be accused—cowardice; or, perhaps, to speak more gently, want of moral courage? And that want of moral courage is one of the most, if not the most, fruitful cause of all sin and suffering on earth. I have another case in my mind besides your own. Father, review your supposed crime. You hear screams—you rush in to find your sister struggling, then being carried off, fainting, in the arms of a ruffian—by one blow you stretch the man lifeless at your feet, and, in terror at what you have done, lose your self-possession, your self-control—actuated by the instinct of self-preservation, and seizing your victim, fly with him and hurl him into the abyss of waters. Grant that all that was the effect of excessive fright and horror—still, if in the days that followed your sister's funeral, you had gone to a magistrate, made a deposition, and invited an investigation, you would have been saved a lifetime of misery. You have suffered all this from the sin of cowardice. Oh! when I see the unutterable misery ensuing from one

single sin on earth, I shudder at what the retributions of eternity may be."

"I thought of making such a deposition, but shrink from doing it. Every day of delay made the declaration more difficult—years rendered the revelation nearly impossible. Who would have given credence to my statement? Who would not rather have supposed it to be an endeavour to shift off a portion of the weight of remorse, or of fear, by making a miserable compromise with conscience, and telling a part of the truth? What evidence had I to present of the truth of my story?"

"Strange that your mind, which decides with such power, clearness and decision in the affairs of others, should be so weak and uncertain in your own concerns. Did you not trust to the ability and readiness of Providence to assist you? It is as I said. Moral cowardice is the fault with which you have to reproach yourself."

"Alas, alas! not for that have I felt this bitter remorse, but for the murder!"

"Father, drink this cordial," said Maurice, holding a glass to his lips. He drank it off obediently. The glass was taken away, and Maurice pressed the thin old hand within his own, and looked with earnest meaning in the old man's face, and said:

"Friend, this venerable hand is free from the stain of blood. Augustus, your supposed murdered victim—lives!"

"What!" exclaimed the old man, starting up with the energy of youth, and staring wildly in the face of his young companion. "What!" again he exclaimed. "Speak again! Do I dream, or am I awake, or did you say—I am losing my reason, for I understand you to say—Ha! ha! ha! You will laugh at me—that—but don't laugh at me—pity the poor old man whom remorse has nearly, or quite maddened—that—Oh! it is too wild even for a madman's brain—that—bear with me—that Augustus, that my sister's husband, whom I murdered, lives—lives!" and he fell back in strong convulsions.

I have heard Maurice de Lorraine say that no joy ever was seen to equal his joy—the joy that nearly killed him with excess. No human heart, receiving back its best-beloved from the arms of death—no criminal, pardoned on the scaffold, could conceive the delicious joy of this soul, frantic in its exultation at deliverance from the guilt of blood. "Lives! lives! he has life! life! These were the words he repeated, over and over again, in a perfect ecstasy of rapture. Ah! the deep despair of his remorse could only be weighed and estimated by the delirium of his joy. He made Maurice reiterate his statement many times, while he himself echoed it in gladness. No fact could excite the least interest beside the overwhelming truth that swept all else from his heart and mind—"he lives!"

(To be continued.)

NEW YEAR'S NIGHT;

OR,

THE PRINCE AND THE WATCHMAN.

CHAPTER I.

OLD Catherine, the watchman's wife, at nine o'clock on New Year's eve, opened her window and put out her head to see if it was fair. The snow was falling in silent, heavy flakes upon the street. She observed crowds of people hurrying to and fro, pouring out of the various inns and coffee-houses, and going to the dances and other entertainments with which it is customary to welcome in the year. But when a huge flake or two had lighted on her nose, she drew back her head, closed the window, and said to her good man:

"Gottlieb, stay at home, and let Philip watch for you to-night, for the snow will be a foot deep ere long, and you know the cold does your old bones no good. The streets will be alive to-night. There seems dancing and feasting in every house. Masqueraders are going about, and Philip will enjoy the fun."

Gottlieb nodded assent.

"My barometer," he said, "the old wound above my knee, has given me warning all day of a change in the weather. It is only right that the son should help me in the duty, since he is to be my successor in it."

We must give the reader to understand that old Gottlieb had been a gallant servant of his king and country, had been the first to mount the wall of a hostile fort, and had been wounded, by a musket-ball, in the thigh. The officer who commanded the attack gained rank and honour in consequence of its success, while Gottlieb was left to creep home on crutches.

After supporting himself by keeping school, he had been promoted to the post of watchman, with the reversion of it to his son Philip, who had, in the meantime, bound himself to a gardener. It was only the

good housewifery of Catherine, and the extreme moderation of old Gottlieb, that enabled them to live on the scanty pittance they possessed. Philip gave his services to the gardener for his board and lodging, and had nothing but what he occasionally received when he carried home flowers to the rich people of the town.

He was a fresh, handsome young fellow of five-and-twenty, and perhaps it was on account of his good looks, as well as his taking manners, that he received sundry extra florins from ladies of a botanical turn of mind.

The good old mother had already put on her cloak to go to the gardener's house to fetch her son, when he entered the little apartment.

"Father," said the young man, giving a hand each to the old couple, "tis snowing, and the snow won't do much good to your rheumatism. I'll take the watch to-night, and you can get comfortably to bed."

"You're a good boy," said Gottlieb.

"And then I've been thinking," continued Philip, "that as to-morrow is New Year's day, I may come and spend it with you. Mother, perhaps, has no joint in the larder, and so—"

"No," interrupted the mother, "we've not exactly any joint, but then we have the rest of that pound of venison; and that, let me tell you, with roast potatoes for a relish, and a little rice, with laurel-leaves by way of ornament, will make a very comfortable meal. Next week we may do better, for the New Year's gifts will be coming in, and Gottlieb's share will be something; but still, venison, roasted potatoes, rice—"

"Not to mention the laurel-leaves, mother—"

"And a flask or two of beer, will be entertainment enough for a prince."

"And so it will, dear mother," said Philip; "but have you paid the rent of the cottage yet?"

Old Gottlieb shrugged his shoulders.

Philip laid a purse on the table.

"There are two-and-twenty florins that I have gathered. I can do very well without them; take them for a New Year's gift, and then we can all three enter on the new year without a debt or a care. God grant you may both be happy in this year, and see many more. For everything else we must trust to the goodness of Heaven!"

Tears came into the mother's eyes as she kissed her son; and old Gottlieb said solemnly:

"You are the prop and stay of our old age. God will reward you. Continue to be honest and good, and to love your parents, so will a blessing rest on you. I can give you nothing for a New Year's gift but a prayer that you may keep your heart pure and true—then you will be rich enough—for a clear conscience is the only wealth worth having."

So said old Gottlieb, with his hand laid on the head of Philip, who had bent down to receive his blessing; and then he wrote down, in an account-book that lay at his side, the sum of two-and-twenty florins his son had given him.

"All the cost of your keep and education is now nearly paid up. Your savings amount to three hundred and seventeen florins, for which I have given my receipt."

"Three hundred and seventeen florins!" cried the old mother, in an extremity of amazement—and then turning to Philip with a voice full of tenderness, "Ah, Philip," she said, "you grieve me. Yes, indeed you do. If you had saved the money for yourself, you might have bought some land with it, and started as a gardener on your own account, and married Rose. Now that is impossible. But take comfort, Philip; we are old and feeble, and you will not have to support us long."

"Mother!" exclaimed Philip, frowning a little, "what are you thinking of? Rose is dear to me as my life; but I would give up a hundred Roses, rather than desert you and my father, or wish your lives shortened by an hour."

"You are right, Philip," said Gottlieb; "loving and marrying are not in the commandments—but to honour your father and mother is a duty enjoined on you by God. To give up your own wishes to your parents, is the truest gratitude of a son; it will gain you the blessing from above; it will make you rich in your own heart."

"If it were only not too long for Rose to wait," said Catherine, "or if you could give up the engagement altogether. For Rose is a pretty girl, that can't be denied; and, although she be poor, there would be no want of wooers. She is as good as beautiful, and understands housekeeping as well as—"

"Never fear, mother," replied Philip. "Rose has solemnly sworn to marry no man but me, and that is sufficient. Her mother has nothing to object to me. And if I had money enough to keep a wife with, Rose would be mine to-morrow. The only hardship is, that her mother will not let us meet so often as we wish. She says frequent meetings do no good; but I differ

from her, and so does Rose—for we think meeting often does us both a great deal of good. And so we have agreed to meet to-night, at twelve o'clock, at the great door of St. Gregory's Church, for Rose is bringing in the year at a friend's house in the neighbourhood, and I will take her home."

In the midst of such conversation the clock struck three-quarters, and Philip took his father's great coat from the warm corner where Catherine had carefully hung it, wrapped himself in it, and taking the lantern and staff, and wishing his parents good-night, proceeded to his post.

CHAPTER II.

Philip stalked majestically through the snow-covered streets, where as many people were still visible as in the middle of the day. Carriages were rattling in all directions, the houses were all brilliantly lighted. Philip enjoyed the scene; he sang his verses at ten o'clock, and blew his horn lustily in the neighbourhood of St. Gregory's Church, with many a thought of Rose.

"Now she hears me," he said to himself; "now she thinks of me, and forgets the scene around her. She won't fail to meet me at twelve o'clock at the church door."

And when he had gone his round, he always returned to the house again, and looked at the window. Sometimes he saw female figures at it, and his heart beat quick at the sight; sometimes he fancied he saw herself; and sometimes he studied the shadows thrown on the window-blind, to discover which of them was Rose's, and to fancy what she was doing. It was certainly not a very pleasant employment to stand in the frost and snow, and look up at a window-curtain. But what care lovers for frost and snow? And watchmen are as fiery and romantic lovers as ever were the knights and paladins of ancient ballads.

He only felt the effects of the cold, when, at eleven o'clock, he had set out upon his round. His teeth chattered; he could scarcely call the hour or sound the horn. He would fain have slipped into a tavern to have warmed himself by the fire. As he was pacing through a lonely by-street, an extraordinary figure met him; a man with a black half-mask on his face, enveloped in a fire-coloured silken mantle, and wearing on his head a magnificent hat, turned up at one side, and ornamented with a number of high and waving plumes.

Philip endeavoured to escape the mask, but in vain. The stranger blocked up his path and said:

"Ha! you are a jolly fellow: you are, my buck, and I like your phiz, phiz, phiz, confound the word! I like your phizominy amazingly. Where are you going, eh?"

"To Mary Street," replied Philip. "I am going to call the hour there."

"Good!" answered the mask. "I'll hear you do it. I'll go with you. Calling hours must be capital fun—no such jolly luck in the day-time. Come, tip us the stave, and do it well; for, mark you, I am a judge of music. Do you sing well?"

Philip saw his companion was in a humour for a joke, and answered:

"I sing better over a cup of ale in a chimney-corner, than up to my knees in snow."

They had now reached Mary Street, and Philip sang and blew the horn.

"Ha, that's but a poor performance," exclaimed the mask. "Give me the horn. I'll witch you with such a stave, you'll half die with delight."

Philip yielded to the mask's wishes, and let him sing the verses and blow. For four or five times all was done as if the stranger had been a watchman all his life. He dilated most eloquently on the joys of such an occupation, and made Philip laugh at the extravagance of his praises. His spirits had evidently owed no small share of their elevation to an extra quantity of champagne, and Philip was hardly surprised at his next proposal.

"I'll tell you what, my friend, I've a great fancy to be a watchman myself for an hour or two. Give me your great-coat, and wide-rimmed hat, and take my domino. Go into an inn and take a bottle at my expense, and when you have finished it, come again and give me back my masking gear. You shall have a couple of florins for your trouble. Come."

But Philip would not consent. At last, however, at the solicitations of the mask, he entered into terms.

He agreed for one half-hour to give up his watchmanship, which would be till half-past eleven. Exactly at that time, the stranger was to come to the great door at St. Gregory's, and give the great-coat, horn, and staff, taking back his own silk mantle, hat and domino. Philip also told him the streets in which he was to call the hour. And in a dark street the change was effected. The mask looked a watchman to the life, while Philip was completely disguised with the half-mask tied over his face, the bonnet, ornamented with a buckle of brilliants, on his head, and

the red silk mantle thrown gracefully over him. When he saw his companion commence his walk, he began to fear he had gone too far in consenting to his wish. He therefore addressed him once more:

"I hope, sir, you'll be very steady while you fill my place, for if you go beyond my bounds, or misbehave in any way, it may cost me my situation."

"Hallo!" answered the stranger. "Do you think I don't know my duty? Off with you, this moment, or I'll put you into the cage. Pretty fellow, giving advice to a watchman—off with you!"

The new guardian of the streets went onward with all the dignity becoming his office, while Philip pursued his way to the tavern, where he intended to regale himself, and thaw his frozen limbs over a glass of ale.

CHAPTER III.

As he was passing the door of a splendid palace, he was laid hold of by a person in a mask, who had alighted from a carriage. Philip turned round, and in a low, whispering voice, inquired what the stranger wished.

"My gracious lord," answered the mask, "in your reverie you have passed the door. Will your royal highness—"

"What royal highness?" replied Philip, laughing. "I am no highness. You are mistaken."

The mask bowed respectfully, and pointed to the brilliant buckle on Philip's hat.

I ask your pardon if I trench on your disguise. But in whatever character you assume, your noble bearing will betray you. Will you condescend to lead the way into the palace? Does your highness intend to dance?"

"To dance?" replied Philip, somewhat bewildered. "No, you see I have boots on."

"To play, then?" inquired the mask.

"Still less. I have brought no money with me," said Philip.

"My heavens!" replied the stranger. "Command my purse. All that I possess is at your service."

Saying this, he forced a full purse into Philip's hand.

"But do you know who I am?" inquired Philip, and rejected the purse.

The mask whispered, with a bow of profound obedience:

"Your royal highness, there is no mistaking Prince Julian."

At this moment Philip heard his deputy in an adjoining street, calling the hour, and he now became aware of his metamorphosis. Prince Julian, who was well-known in the capital as a lively, wild, and good-hearted young man, had been the person with whom he had changed his clothes.

"Now, then," thought Philip, "as he enacts the watchman so well, I'll see if, for one half-hour, I can't be the prince. If I make any mistake, he has himself to blame for it."

He wrapped the red silken mantle closer around him, took the offered purse, put it into his pocket, and said:

"Who are you, mask? I will return your gold to-morrow."

"I am the Chamberlain Pilzou."

"Good—lead the way—I'll follow."

The chamberlain obeyed, and tripped up the marble stairs, Philip coming close behind him. They entered a magnificent hall, illuminated with a thousand candles and dazzling chandeliers. A confused crowd of maskers jostled each other, sultans, Bavarian broom-girls, knights in armour, nuns, magicians, goddesses, satyrs, monks, Jews, Medes and Persians.

Philip for awhile was abashed and blinded. Such splendour he had never dreamed of. In the middle of the hall the dance was carried on by those who preferred that amusement, to the music of a full band. Philip, whom the heat of the apartment recovered from his frozen state, was so bewildered with the scene that he could little more than nod his head to the various addresses made to him.

"Will you go to the hazard-table?" whispered the chamberlain, who stood before him, and whom Philip now saw to be dressed as a Brahmin.

"Let me get thawed first," answered Philip; "I am an icicle at present."

"A glass of mulled claret?" enquired the chamberlain, and led him into the refreshment-room.

The pseudo-prince did justice to the invitation. One glass after another was emptied. The wine was splendid, and it spread its genial warmth through Philip's veins.

"How is it you don't dance to-night, chamberlain?" he asked of his companion, when they returned into the hall.

The Brahmin sighed, and shrugged his shoulders. "I have no pleasure now in the dance. Gaiety is distasteful to me. The only person I cared for, the Countess Bonan, I thought she loved me. Our families

offered no objection—but all at once she broke with me."

His voice trembled as he spoke.

"How?" said Philip, "I never heard of such a thing."

"You never heard of it?" repeated the other; "the whole city rings with it. The quarrel occurred a fortnight since; she has never given me the least explanation. She has sent back three letters I wrote, her unopened. She is a declared enemy of the Baroness Reizenhal, and had made me promise to cut her acquaintance. But think how unfortunate it was! When the Queen-mother made the hunting party to Freudenwold, she appointed me cavalier to the baroness. What could I do? It was impossible to refuse. On the very birthday of the adorable Bonan, I was forced to set out. She only heard who was my companion, but she did not know my heart."

"Well, then," said Philip, affected by the chamberlain's distress, "take advantage of the present joyous season. The new year makes up all quarrels. Is the countess here?"

"That is she," replied the Brahmin; "the Carmelite on the left of the third pillar, beside the two black dominoes. She had laid aside her mask. Ah, prince, your highness's intercession would—"

Philip gave him no time to finish the sentence, the claret had inspired him. He walked directly to the Carmelite. The Countess Bonan looked at him for some time with a cold eye and flushed cheek, when he placed himself beside her. She was a beautiful creature, yet Philip remained persuaded that Rose was a thousand times more beautiful.

"Countess," he said, and became embarrassed when he met her clear, bright eyes fixed on him.

"Prince," said the countess, "an hour ago you were somewhat too bold."

"Fair countess, I am therefore at this present moment the more quiet."

"So much the better, then I shall be safe from your attacks."

"Fair lady, allow me to ask one question. Have you put on this Carmelite mantle to do penance for your sins?"

"I have nothing to do penance for."

"What, countess! your cruelties, your injustice to that poor Brahmin yonder, who seems neglected by all the world."

The beautiful Carmelite cast down her eyes and appeared uneasy.

"And do you know, fair countess, that in the Freudenwold affair, the chamberlain is as innocent as I am?"

"As you, prince?" said the countess, and bent her brows a little; "why did you not tell me that an hour ago?"

"You are right, dear countess, I was too bold. You yourself have said so. But I now declare to you the chamberlain was forced to go to Freudenwold by command of the queen, against his will was forced to be cavalier to the hated Reizenhal—"

"Hated, by him!" interrupted the countess, with a bitter laugh, "well, go on."

"Yes, hated; he despises the baroness. He has given up all acquaintance with her, and treated her with marked neglect, and all this for your sake. You are the only person he loves—to you he offers his hand, his heart—and you, you reject them?"

"How comes it, prince, that you intercede so warmly for Pilzou? You did not do so once."

"That was because I did not know him, and still less the wretchedness your behaviour causes him. I swear to you he is innocent; you have nothing to forgive in him, he has much to forgive in you."

"Hush!" whispered the Carmelite, "we are watched here; come from this."

She replaced the mask and stood up. Putting her arm within Philip's they crossed the hall and entered a side-room. The countess uttered many complaints against the chamberlain, but they were the complaints of jealous love.

The Brahmin soon after came timidly into the apartment. There was a deep silence among the three, and the countess dashed away the tears that had gathered in her eyes. Philip, not knowing how to conclude his intercession better, led the Brahmin to the Carmelite, and joined their hands together without saying a word, and left them to themselves. He himself returned into the hall.

CHAPTER IV.

HERE he was addressed hastily by a Mameluke: "I'm glad I have met you, domino. Is the flower girl in the side-room?"

Without waiting for an answer, the Mameluke rushed into it, but returned, evidently disappointed.

"One word with you, domino," he said, and led Philip to a retired window in a recess of the hall.

"What do you want?" asked Philip, surprised.

"I beseech you," replied the Mameluke, with a subdued yet resolute voice, "where is the flower girl?"

"What is the flower girl to me?"

"But to me she is everything," answered the other, whose suppressed voice and agitated demeanour showed that a fearful struggle was going on within—"to me she is everything. She is my wife. You will make me wretched. Prince, I conjure you, drive me not to madness. Think of my wife no more!"

"With all my heart!" answered Philip, drily.

"What have I to do with your wife?"

"Oh, prince, prince!" exclaimed the Mameluke, "I am resolved on my conduct, if it should cost me my life. Dissemble with me no longer. I have discovered everything. Here, look at this! it is the letter my false wife slipped into your hand. Without having had time to open it, you dropped it in the crowd."

Philip took the note. "I was written with a pencil. Change your mask. Everybody knows you. My husband watches you. He does not know me. If you obey me, you know your reward."

"Hem!" murmured Philip. "As I live, this was not written to me. I don't trouble my head about your wife!"

"Fury, prince! Drive me not mad! Do you know who it is that speaks to you? I am the Marshal Blakenward. Your advances to my wife are not unknown to me, ever since the last rout at the palace."

"My lord marshal," answered Philip, quietly, "excuse me for saying that jealousy has blinded you. If you knew me well, you would never suspect me of such proceedings. I give you my word of honour I will never trouble your wife."

"Are you in earnest, prince?"

"Entirely."

"Will you give me proof?"

"Whatever you may require."

"You have hindered her up to this time from going to visit her relations in Poland. Will you recommend her to do so now?"

"Delighted, if you desire it!"

"Do it—do it, your royal highness! You will prevent incalculable misery!"

The Mameluke continued for some time, sometimes begging and praying, and sometimes threatening so furiously that Philip feared he might lay violent hands on him before the whole assembly. He therefore took the opportunity of quitting him as soon as he could. Scarcely had he lost himself in the crowd, when a female, closely enveloped in widow's weeds, tapped him familiarly on the arm, and said:

"Butterfly, whither away? Have you not one word of consolation for the disconsolate widow?"

Philip answered very politely:

"Beautiful widows find no lack of comforters. May I venture to include myself in the number?"

"Why are you so disobedient, and why haven't you changed your mask?" said the widow, while she led him aside from the crowd. "Do you really fancy, prince, that every one here does not know who you are?"

"They are very much mistaken in me, I assure you," replied Philip.

"Not at all," answered the widow; "they know you very well, and if you don't instantly change your mask, I shan't speak to you again the whole evening; I have no desire to give my husband an opportunity of making a scene."

By this, Philip discovered who his companion was. "You were the beautiful flower-girl; are your roses withered so soon?"

"What is there that does not wither—not the constancy of man? I saw you when you slipped off the Carmelite. Confess your inconstancy; you can deceive no longer."

"Hem," answered Philip, coldly, "accuse me as you will, I can return the accusation."

"How? In what respect?"

"Why, for instance, there is not a more constant man alive than the marshal."

"There is not, indeed! and I am wrong, very wrong to have listened to you so long. But my remorse is unavailing if he has discovered our flirtation."

"Since the last rout at the palace, fair widow—"

"Where you were so unguarded and particular, wicked prince."

"Let us repair the mischief. Let us part. I honour the marshal, and for my part should be ashamed to do him wrong."

The widow looked at him for some time in speechless amazement.

"If indeed you have any regard for me," continued Philip, "you will go instantly into Poland, to visit your relations. 'Tis better that we do not meet. A beautiful woman is beautiful; but a pure and virtuous woman is more beautiful still."

"Prince!" cried the astonished widow, "are you really in earnest? Have you ever loved me, or have you all along deceived?"

"Look you," replied Philip. "I am a tempter of a peculiar kind. I search constantly among women to find truth and virtue, and alas, it is but seldom I encounter them. Only the true and virtuous can keep me constant, therefore I am true to none; but no, there is one that keeps me in her charms. I am sorry, fair widow, that one is—not you."

"You are in a strange mood to-night, prince," answered the widow, and the trembling of her voice and heaving of her bosom, showed the effect the conversation had on her.

"No," replied Philip, "I am in as rational a mood to-night as I ever was in my life. I wish only to repair an injury: I have promised to your husband to do so."

"How!" exclaimed the widow, in a voice of terror, "you have told everything to the marshal?"

"Not everything," replied Philip, "only what I know."

The widow wrung her hands in the extremity of agitation, and at last said:

"Where is my husband?"

Philip pointed to the Mameluke, who at this moment approached them.

"Prince," said the widow, in a tone of inexpressible rage and hatred, "prince—but you are unworthy of a thought. I never dreamed that any one could be capable of such ungentlemanly, such unmanly behaviour. You are an impostor. My husband in the dress of a barbarian is a prince, you are a barbarian. In this world you see me no more—go, sir!"

With these words she turned proudly away from him, and going up to the Mameluke, accompanied him from the hall in deep and earnest conversation. Philip laughed quietly at the result of his advice, and said to himself:

"My substitute, the watchman, will be somewhat astonished at all this; as for me, I think I make a very decent sort of a prince; I only hope when he returns he will proceed as I have begun."

He went up to the dancers, and was delighted to see the beautiful Carmelite standing up in a set with the Brahmin. No sooner did the latter perceive him, than he kissed his hand to him, and in dumb show gave him to understand that the reconciliation was complete. Philip thought:

"It is a pity I am not to be prince all my lifetime. How the people would rejoice; to be a prince is the easiest thing in the world. He can do more with a single word than a barrister with a three hours' speech. Yet, if I were a prince, my beautiful Rose would be lost to me for ever. After all, I think I don't wish to be a prince."

He now looked at the clock, and saw it was half-past eleven. The Mameluke hurried up to him and gave him a paper.

"Prince," he exclaimed, "I could fall at your feet and thank you on my knees—I am reconciled to my wife. You have broken her heart, but she will yet learn to thank you for it. We travel to Poland this very night, and there we shall fix our home. Farewell, prince. I shall be ready, whenever your royal highness requires me, to pour out my last drop of blood in your service. My gratitude is eternal—farewell!"

"Stay," said Philip, "what am I to do with this paper?"

"Oh, that; it is the amount of my loss to your highness last week at hazard. I had nearly forgotten it; but before my departure, I must clear my debts of honour. Again and again, Heaven bless you, and farewell!"

With these words the marshal disappeared.

CHAPTER V.

PHILIP opened the paper and read in it an order for five thousand florins. He put it in his pocket and thought: "Well, it would be very pleasant to be a prince."

While musing on the difference between five thousands at play, and his own board and lodging at the gardener's, a voice whispered in his ear:

"Please your royal highness, we are both discovered; I shall blow my brains out!"

Philip turned in amazement, and saw a man at his side.

"What do you want my friend?" he asked, in an unconcerned tone.

"I am —, whispered the man. This very night I may be arrested and carried to the castle; I'll sooner hang myself."

"No need of that," replied Philip.

"What! am I to be made infamous for my whole life? I am lost, I tell you. The duke will demand satisfaction. His back is black and blue yet with the cudgelling I gave him. I am lost, and the baker's daughter too. I will jump from the bridge and drown myself at once!"

"What have you and the baker's daughter to do with it?"

"Your royal highness banter me, and I am in despair. I humbly beseech you to give two minutes' conversation."

Philip followed into a small boudoir imperfectly lighted. The stranger threw himself upon a sofa, and sighed and groaned aloud. Philip found some sandwiches and wine on the table, and helped himself with the utmost composure.

"I wonder your royal highness can be so very apathetic at what I have told you. If the Neapolitan that acted the conjurer were here, he might save us by some contrivance. As it is, he has slipped out of the scrape, and left us to —"

"So much the better," interrupted Philip, replenishing his glass. "Since he has got out of the way, we can throw all the blame on his shoulders."

"How can we do that? The duke, I tell you, knows that you and I, and the marshal's wife, and the baker's daughter, were all in the plot together, to take advantage of his superstition. He knows that it was you that engaged Salmoni to play the conjurer; and it was I who instructed the baker's daughter, with whom he is in love, how to inveigle him into the snare; that it was I who enacted the ghost, who knocked him down and cudgelled him till he roared again. If I had only not carried the joke so far; but I wished to cool his love a little for my sweetheart. It was an infernal business. I will swallow a pound of arsenic."

"Rather swallow a glass of wine. It is delicious tippie," said Philip, and filled up a bumper by way of good example. "For to tell you the truth, my friend, I think you are rather a faint-hearted sort of a fellow, for a colonel, to think of hanging, drowning, shooting, and poisoning yourself about such a ridiculous story as that. One of them would be too much; but as to all four—pooh, man, nonsense, fill your glass, I tell you; at this moment I don't know what to make out of your account."

"Your royal highness have pity on me, my brain is turned. The duke's page, a particular friend of mine, has told me this very moment that the marshal's wife went up to the duke and told him that the trick played on him at the baker's house was planned by Prince Julian, who opposed his marriage with his sister; and the spirit he saw was himself, sent by the promise we got from him to make the baker's daughter his mistress immediately after the marriage; and that these were the reasons his suit had failed. And now your royal highness is in possession of everything."

"And a pretty story it is!" said Philip. "Why, behaviour like that would be a disgrace to the meanest and vilest of the people."

"It would, indeed. It is impossible to behave more meanly and vulgarly than the marshal's lady. The woman must be a fury. My gracious prince, you must save me from destruction."

"Where is the duke?" asked Philip.

"The page told me he started up on hearing the story, and only asked where the king was."

"Is the king here, then?"

"Oh, yes, he is at play in the next room, with the archbishop and the minister of police."

Philip walked with long steps through the boudoir. The case required consideration.

"Please, your royal highness to protect me. Your own honour is at stake. You can easily make all straight; otherwise I am all prepared, and ready at the first intimation of danger to fly across the border. To-morrow I shall expect your commands as to what I have to look for."

With these words the stranger took his leave.

CHAPTER VI.

"It is high time I were a watchman again," thought Philip.

He was interrupted by a mask.

"Who are you?" said Philip.

"Count Bodenlos, the minister of finance, at your highness's service," answered the minister, and lifted his mask.

"Well, then, my lord, what are your commands?"

"May I speak openly? I waited on your royal highness thrice, and was never admitted to the honour of an audience; and yet, Heaven is my witness, no man in all this court has a deeper interest in your royal highness than I have."

"I am greatly obliged to you," replied Philip. "But what is your business just now? Be as short as you can."

"May I venture to speak of the house of Abraham Levi?"

"As much as you like."

"They have applied to me about the fifty thousand florins they advanced to your royal highness, and threaten to apply to the king. And you remember your promise to his Majesty when last he paid your debts."

"Can't the people wait?" asked Philip.

"No more than the brothers, goldsmiths, who demand their seventy-five thousand."

"It is all one to me, if the people won't wait for their money, I must —"

"No hasty resolution, I beg. I have it in my power to make everything comfortable, if —"

"Well, if what?"

"If you will honour me by listening to me one moment. I hope to have no difficulty in covering all debts. The house of Abraham Levi has bought up immense quantities of corn, so that the price is very much raised. A decree against importation will raise it three or four times higher. By giving Abraham Levi the monopoly, the business will be arranged. The house erases your debt, and pays off your seventy-five thousand florins to the goldsmiths, and I give you the receipts. But everything depends on my continuing for another year at the head of the finance. If Baron Griefensack succeeds in ejecting me from the ministry, I am incapacitated from serving your royal highness as I could wish. If your royal highness will leave the party of Griefensack, our point is gained."

"I wish to Heaven you and your ministry, and Abraham Levi, were all three at Jericho! I tell you what, unless you lower the price of corn, take away the monopoly from that infernal Jew, and add no new burdens to the people, I'll go this moment and reveal your villany to the king, and get you and Abraham Levi banished from the country. So, see to it; I'll keep my word."

Philip turned away in a rage, and proceeded into the dancing-room, leaving the minister of finance motionless as a mummy, and petrified with amazement.

CHAPTER VII.

"WHEN does your royal highness require the carriage?"

These words were addressed to Philip, as he threaded his way through the crowd.

"Not at all," answered Philip.

"It is half-past eleven, and the beautiful singer expects you. She will tire of waiting."

"Let her sing something to cheer herself."

"How, prince, have you changed your mind? Would you leave the captivating Rollina in the lurch, and throw away the golden opportunity you have been sighing for for months? The letter you sent to-day, enclosing the diamond bauble, did its work marvellously. She surrenders at such a summons. Then why are you now so cold? What is the cause of the sudden change?"

"That is my business, not yours," said Philip.

"I have discovered a girl; oh, prince! there is not such another in the world! She is totally unknown; beautiful as an angel—eyes like stars—hair like sunbeams; in short, the sweetest creature I ever beheld. The mother is the widow of a poor weaver, a simple, honest woman, who —"

"And the mother's name is —"

"Widow Bittaler, in Milk Street; and the daughter, fairest of all flowers, is called Rose."

At the sound of that loved name, Philip started back. His first inclination was to knock the communicative Dutchman down.

"If I find you within half a mile of Milk Street, I'll dash your miserable brains out before you can shout for mercy."

The Dutchman stood writhing with pain.

"May it please your highness, I could not imagine you loved the girl as it seems you do."

"I love her! I will acknowledge it before the whole world."

"And are you loved in return?"

"That's none of your business. Never mention her to me again. Leave her undisturbed. Now you know what I think. Quit my sight!"

CHAPTER VIII.

In the meantime, Philip's substitute supported his character as watchman in the snow-covered streets. For the first quarter of an hour he attended to the directions left by Philip, and went his round, and called the hour with great decorum, except that instead of the usual watchman's verses, he favoured the public with rhymes of his own. He was cogitating a new stanza with which to illuminate the people, when the door of the house opened, and a well wrapped up girl beckoned to him, and sank into the shadow of the house.

The prince left his stanza half-finished, and followed the girl. A soft hand grasped his in the darkness, and a voice whispered:

"How d'ye do, dear Philip? Speak low, that nobody may hear us. I have only got away from the company for a moment, to speak to you as you passed. Are you happy to see me?"

"Blest as the immortal gods, my angel; who could

be otherwise than happy by the side of such a goddess?"

"Ah, I've some good news for you, Philip. You must dine at our house to-morrow. My mother has allowed me to ask you. You'll come!"

"For the whole day, and as much longer as you wish. Would we might be together till the end of the world. 'Twould be a life fit for the deepest votary of love."

"Listen, Philip: in half-an-hour I shall be at St. Gregory's. I shall expect you there. You won't fail me? Do not keep me waiting long—we shall have a walk together. Go now, we might be discovered."

She tried to go, but he held her back, and threw his arms around her.

"What, will you leave me so coldly?" he said, and tried to press a kiss upon her lips.

Rose did not know what to think of his boldness, for Philip had never ventured such a liberty before. She struggled to free herself, but Julian held her arms, till at last she had to buy her liberty by submitting to a kiss, and begged him to go. But he seemed not at all inclined to move.

"What, go? and such a creature here beside me? I'm not such an idiot—no, no!"

"But then it ain't right, Philip."

"Not right! why not, my beauty? there's nothing against kissing in the ten commandments."

"You must have been drinking, Philip. You know very well we can't marry, and —"

"Not marry? Why not? I'll marry you to-morrow, to-night—this very hour! not marry, indeed!"

"Philip, Philip! why will you talk such folly? Ah, Philip, I had a dream last night."

"A dream, what was it?"

"You had won a prize in the lottery; we were both so happy! You had bought a beautiful garden, all filled with flowers, and such cabbages and cauliflowers, such a fortune as it would have been! And when I awoke, Philip, I felt so wretched, I wished I had not dreamed such a happy dream. You've nothing in the lottery, have you, Philip? Have you really won anything? The drawing took place to-day."

"How much must I have gained to win you, too?"

"Ah, Philip, if you had only gained a thousand florins, you might buy such a pretty garden."

"A thousand florins! And what if it were more?"

"Ah, Philip, what is it true? is it really? Don't deceive me, 'twill be worse than the dream. You had a ticket, and you've won! tell me, tell me!"

"All you can wish for."

Rose flung her arms around his neck in the extremity of her joy, and resisted no longer when he pressed the second kiss on her cheek.

"All that I wished for! the thousand! and will they pay whole the sum at once! Answer me, answer me!" she added, for the prince was so astonished at the turn affairs had taken, that he scarcely knew what to say. "Will they pay the thousand florins all in gold, Philip?"

"They have done so already, and if it will add anything to your happiness, I will hand it to you this moment."

"What, have you got it with you?"

The prince took out his purse which he had filled with money in expectation of some play.

"Take it, weigh it my girl!" he said, placing it in her hand and kissing her again. "This, then, makes you mine?"

"Oh, not this, nor all the gold in the world, if you were not my own dear Philip!"

"And now if I had given you all this money and were not your own dear Philip?"

"I would fling the purse at your feet, and make you a curtsy as I rushed away from you," said Rose, overjoyed, and little suspecting that Philip was out of hearing.

A door now opened; the light streamed out, and the voices of the party within were heard. Rose slipped noiselessly away, whispering:

"In half-an-hour, dear Philip, at St. Gregory's." She tripped up the steps, leaving the prince in the darkness. Disconcerted by the suddenness of the parting, and his curiosity excited by his ignorance of the name of his new acquaintance, not even having had a full view of her face, he consoled himself with the rendezvous at St. Gregory's Church door. This he resolved to keep, though it was evident that all the tenderness which had been bestowed on him was intended for his friend the watchman.

CHAPTER IX.

THE interview with Rose, or the coldness of the night, increased the effect of the wine to such an extent, that the hilarity of the young prince broke out in a way very unbecoming to the solemnity of the

office he had assumed. Standing in the midst of a crowd of people, in the middle of the street, he blew so lustily upon the horn that the neighbouring windows were soon crowded with terrified women, who expected no less than that the city had been taken by assault. He then shouted at the full pitch of his lungs:

The trade in our beloved city,
Is at a standstill, more's the pity.
Our very girls, both dark and pale,
Can now no longer find a sale;
They furnish up their charms with care,
But no one buys the brittle ware!

"Shame—shame!" cried several female voices, at the end of the complimentary effusion, which, however, was rewarded by a loud laugh from the men. "Bravo, watchman!" cried some; "encore, encore!" shouted others.

"How dare you, you insolent fellow, to insult the ladies in the open street?" growled a young lieutenant, angrily, with a young lady on his arm.

"Mr. Lieutenant, answered a jolly miller, 'the watchman sings nothing but the truth, and the lady at your side is a proof of it. Ha! young minx, do you know who I am? Is it right for a betrothed bride to be wandering o' nights about the streets with other men. To-morrow your mother shall hear of this. I'll have nothing more to do with you, and that's plump."

The girl hid her face, and nudged the young officer to lead her away. But the lieutenant, like a brave soldier, scorned to retreat from the miller, and determined to keep the field. With many mutual extracts from the polite vocabulary, the quarrel grew hotter and hotter. At last, however, two stout townsmen lifted their huge cudgels above the head of the wrathful son of Mars, while one of them cried:

"Don't make any more fuss about the piece of goods beside you, she ain't worth it. The miller's a good fellow, and the watchman's song was true as gospel. A plain tradesman can hardly venture to marry now; the women's heads are all turned by the soldiers. There is no chance for any of us when a red-coat comes in the way."

But the officer was soon joined by some of his companions, and there seemed manifest symptoms of a row. The boys, by way of a prelude to the engagement, amused themselves by firing volleys of snowballs on both the contending parties. One of these missiles hit the irate lieutenant with the force of a twelve-pounder on the nose, and he, considering this the commencement of active operations, lost no time in bestowing a token of affection, in the shape of his doubled fist, on the right eye of the miller, and in a few minutes the battle became general.

The prince, who had laughed amazingly at the first commencement of the uproar, had taken himself to another region before it actually came to blows. In the course of his wanderings he came to the palace of Count Bodenlos, the minister of finance, with whom, as Philip had discovered at the masquerade, the prince was not on the best of terms. The countess had a party. Julian, whose poetical fervour was still in full force, planted himself opposite the windows, and blew a peal on his horn. Astounded at the noise, several ladies and gentlemen opened the windows and listened to what he should say.

"Watchman," cried one of them, "troll out your Christmas verses, and a florin is your reward."

This invitation brought a fresh accession of the countess's party to the windows. Julian called the hour in the true watchman's voice, and sang, loud and clear enough to be distinctly heard inside:

Ye who are sunk in poor estate,
And fear the needy bankrupt's fate,
Pray to your patron saint, St. Francis,
To make you chief of the finances;
Then you may make your country groan,
And rob its purse to fill your own.

"Intolerable!" screamed the lady of the minister; "who is the insolent varlet that dares such an insult?"

"May it please your excellency," answered Julian, imitating a Jew in voice and manner, "I wash only intendish to shing you a pretty shong. I am de Shew, Abraham Levi, well known at dish court. Your ladyship knowsh me ver' well."

"How dare you tell such a lie, you villain?" exclaimed a voice, trembling with rage at one of the windows, "how dare you say you are Abraham Levi? I am Abraham Levi! You are a cheat!"

"Call the police!" cried the countess; "let the ruffian be arrested!"

At these words the party confusedly withdrew from the windows. Nor did Julian remain where he was; he slipped quietly off, and effected his escape through a cross-street, down which he was unpursued. A crowd of servants rushed out of the finance minister's palace, and laid hold of the real guardian of the night, who was carefully perambulating his beat, unconscious of any offence he had committed. In spite of all he could say, he was carried off to the head-policeman, and charged with causing a disturbance

by singing libellous songs. The officer of the police shook his head at the unaccountable event, and said:

"We have already one watchman in custody, whose abominable verses caused a very serious affray between the town's-people and the garrison. The devil fly away with all poets!"

The prisoner would not confess to anything, but swore prodigiously at the rascality of a set of footmen, headed by a butler and two fat cooks, that disturbed him in his peaceful perambulation, and accused him of singing insults against noble ladies whose names he had never heard. While the examination was going on, and one of the secretaries of the finance minister began to be doubtful whether the poor watchman was really in fault or not, an uproar was heard outside, and loud cries of "Watch, watch!"

The policemen rushed out, and in a few minutes the field-marshal entered the office, accompanied by some aides-de-camp and the captain of the guards on duty.

"Bring in the scoundrel!" said the marshal, pointing to the door: and the two soldiers brought in a watchman, whom they held close prisoner, and whom they disarmed of his staff and horn.

"Are the watchmen all gone mad to-night?" exclaimed the chief of police.

"I'll have the rascal punished for his infamous verses," said the marshal, storming with rage.

"Your excellency," exclaimed the watchman, terrified at the rage of the great man, "Heaven is my witness I never made a verse in my born days."

"Silence!" roared the marshal. "I'll have you hanged for them! And if you contradict me again, I'll cut you to pieces on the spot."

The police officer respectfully observed to the field-marshal that there must be some poetical epidemic among the watchmen, for three had been brought before him within the last quarter of an hour, accused of the same offence.

"Gentlemen," said the marshal to the officers who had accompanied him, "since this scoundrel refuses to confess, it will be necessary to take down from your remembrance, the words of his atrocious libel. Let them be written down while you still recollect them. Come, who can say them?"

The officer of the police wrote to the dictation of the gentlemen, who remembered the whole verse between them:

"O'er empty head a feather swalling,
Adown the back the long cue trailing,
Slim waist and padded breast to charm ye,
These are the merits of the army!
Cards, fiddling, flirting, and so on,
By these the marshal's staff is won."

"Do you deny, you rascal!" cried the field-marshal to the terrified watchman; "do you deny that you sang these infamous lines as I was coming out of my house?"

"I assure your worship's honour, I know nothing at all about the lines."

"Why did you run away, then, when you saw me?"

"I did not run away."

"What?" said the two officers, who accompanied the marshal, "not run away? Were you not out of breath when at last we laid hold of you?"

"Yes, but it was with fright at being so ferociously attacked. I am trembling yet in every limb."

"Look the obstinate villain up till the morning," said the marshal, "he will come to his senses by that time!" With these words, the wrathful dignitary went away.

These incidents had set the whole police force of the city on the watch. In the next ten minutes two more astonished watchmen were brought to the office on similar charges with the others. One was accused of singing a libel under the window of the minister for foreign affairs, in which it was insinuated that there were no affairs to which he was more foreign than those of his own department. The other had sung some verses before the door of the papal legate, informing him that the "lights of the church" were by no means deficient in tallow, but gave a great deal more smoke than illumination. The prince, who had wrought the poor watchmen all this woe, was always lucky enough to escape, and grew bolder and bolder with every new attempt. The affair was talked of everywhere. The minister of police, who was at cards with the king, was informed of this insurrection among the watchmen, and as a proof of it, some of the verses were given him in writing. His majesty laughed very heartily at the doggerel, and ordered the next poetical watchman who should be taken, to be brought before him. He broke up the card-table, for he saw the minister had lost his good-humour.

CHAPTER X.

In the dancing-hall next to the card-room, Philip looked at his watch, and discovered that the time of his rendezvous with Rose at St. Gregory's was nearly

come. He was by no means sorry at the thoughts of giving back his silk mantle and the plumed bonnet to his substitute, for he began to find high life not quite to his taste. As he was going to the door, the stranger once more came up to him, and whispered, "Please your highness, Duke Herrman is seeking for you everywhere."

Philip took no notice, but hurried out, followed by the stranger. When they got out into the lobby, the stranger cried out in alarm:

"By Heaven, here comes the duke!" and slipped back into the hall.

A tall, black mask walked fiercely up to Philip, and said, "Stay a moment, sir: I've a word or two to say to you; I've been seeking for you long."

"Quick, then," said Philip, "for I have no time to lose."

"I would not waste a moment, sir, I brook no delay, you owe me satisfaction, you have injured me infinitely."

"Not that I am aware of."

"You do not know me, perhaps?" said the duke, lifting up his mask; "now that you see me, your own conscience will save me any more words. I demand satisfaction! You and the cursed Neapolitan Salomoni have deceived me."

"I know nothing about it," said Philip.

"You got up that shameful scene in the cellar of the baker's daughter. It was at your instigation that Colonel Calt made an assault on me with a cudgel."

"No such thing, I deny it."

"What? The Lady Blakensward, the marshal's lady, was an eye-witness of it all, and she has told me every circumstance."

"She has told your grace a cock-and-bull story; I have had nothing to do with it; if you had ridiculous scenes in a baker's cellar, that was your own fault."

"I ask, once more, will you give me satisfaction? If not, I will expose you. Follow me instantly to the king. You shall either have to do with me or with his Majesty."

Philip became perplexed. "Your grace," he said, "I have no wish either to fight with you, or to go before the king."

This was indeed the truth, for he was afraid he should be discovered and punished, of course, for the part he had played. He, therefore, tried to get off by every means, and watched the door to seize a favourable moment for effecting the escape. The duke, on the other hand, observed the uneasiness of the prince, (as he believed him) and waxed more valourous every minute. At last he seized poor Philip by the arm, and was dragging him into the hall.

"What do you want with me?" said Philip, sorely frightened, shaking off the duke.

"You shall come with me to the king. He shall hear how shamefully you insult a stranger at his court."

"Very good," replied Philip, who saw no hope of escape, except by continuing the character of the prince. "Very good; come along, then. By good luck, I happen to have the agreement with me between you and the baker's daughter, in which you promise—"

"Nonsense! folly!" answered the duke, "that was only a piece of fun that one may be allowed, surely, with a baker's daughter. Show it, if you like. I will explain all that."

But it appeared that the duke was not quite sure of the explanations. He pressed Philip no more to go before the king. He, however, insisted more earnestly than ever on his getting into his carriage, and going that moment to decide the matter with sword and pistol. Philip pointed out the danger of such a proceeding, but the duke overruled all objections. He had made every preparation, and there could be no chance of their being interrupted.

"If you are not the greatest coward in Europe, you will follow me to the carriage, prince."

"I—am—no—prince," at last stuttered Philip, now driven to extremities.

"You are, you are! I know by your hat and mantle. You shan't escape me."

Philip lifted up his mask, and showed the duke his face.

"Now, then, am I a prince?"

Duke Herrman, when he saw the countenance of a man he had never seen before, started back, and stood gazing as if he had been petrified. To have revealed his secrets to a perfect stranger; 'twas horrible beyond conception! But before he had recovered from his surprise, Philip had opened the door and effected his escape.

CHAPTER XI.

The moment he found himself at liberty, he took off his hat and feathers, and wrapping them in his silken mantle, rushed through the streets towards St.

Gregory's, carrying them under his arm. There stood Rose, already, in a corner of the church-door, expecting his arrival.

"Ah! Philip, dear Philip," she said, "how happy you have made me! how lucky we are! I have been waiting here this quarter of an hour, but never cared for the frost and snow—my happiness was so great: I am so glad you're come back!"

"And I, too, dear Rose. Confound all the trinketrunkums of the great, say I. But I'll tell you some other time of the scenes I've had. Tell me now, my darling, how you are, and whether you love me still!"

"Ah, Philip, you've become a great man now, and it would be better to ask if you still care anything for me."

"And how do you know, dear Rose, that I've become a great man, eh?"

"Why, you told me yourself. Ah! Philip, Philip, I only hope you won't be proud, now that you've grown so rich. I am but a poor girl, and not good enough for you now; and I have been thinking, Philip, if you forsake me, I would rather have had you continue a poor gardener. I could not survive it, dear Philip, indeed I could not!"

"What are you talking about, Rose? 'Tis true that for one half-hour I have been a prince, but that was nothing but fun. Now I am a watchman again, and as poor as ever. To be sure, I have five thousand florins in my pocket, that I got from a Mameluke, that would make us rich, no doubt; but, alas! they don't belong to me!"

"You're speaking nonsense, Philip!" said Rose, giving him the purse of gold that Julian had given her. "Here, take back your money, 'tis too heavy for my pocket."

"What should I do with all this gold? Where did you get it, Rose?"

"You won it in the lottery, Philip."

"What! have I won? and they told me at the office my number was a blank! Hurrah! hurrah! I've won! Now I'll buy old Nothman's garden, and marry you, dear Rose! How much is it?"

"Are you crazy, Philip, or have you drunk too much? You must know better than I can tell you how much it is. I only looked at it quietly under the table at my friend's, and was frightened to see so many glittering coins, all of gold, Philip. Ah! then I thought, no wonder Philip was so forward—for you know, you were very forward, Philip—but I can't blame you for it. Oh, I could throw my own arms round your neck and cry for joy!"

"If you insist on doing so, of course I won't object. But there's some misunderstanding here. Who was it that gave you this money, and told you it was my prize in the lottery? I have my ticket safe in my drawer at home, and nobody has asked me for it."

"Ah! Philip, don't play off your jokes on me! you yourself told me of it an hour ago, and gave me the purse with your own hand."

"Rose, try to recollect yourself. This morning I saw you, and we agreed to meet here to-night, but since that time I have not seen you for an instant."

"No, except half-an-hour ago, when I saw you at Steinman's door. But what is that bundle under your arm? why are you without a hat? Philip! Philip! be careful. All that gold may turn your brain. You've been in some tavern, Philip, and have drunk more than you should. But tell me, what is the bundle? Why—here's a woman's silk gown. Philip—Philip, where have you been?"

"Certainly not with you half-an-hour ago; you want to play tricks on me, I fancy; where have you got that money, I should like to know?"

"Answer me first, Philip, where you got that woman's gown. Where have you been, sir?"

CHAPTER XII.

As this was a lover's quarrel, it ended as lovers' quarrels invariably do. When Rose took out her white pocket-handkerchief, and put it to her beautiful eyes, and wiped away her tears, that sole argument proved instantly that she was in the right, and Philip decidedly in the wrong. He confessed he was to blame for everything, and told her that he had been at a masked ball, and that his bundle was not a silk gown, but a man's mantle and a hat and feathers. Rose at first could scarcely believe the story of the exchange between him and Prince Julian, but Philip begged her to wait and she would see his Royal Highness come to that very place to give up his watchman's great coat, and reclaim his own attire.

Rose, in return, related all her adventures; but when she came to the incident of the kiss—

"Hold there!" cried Philip; "I didn't kiss you, nor, I am sure, did you kiss me in return."

"I am sure 'twas intended for you," replied Rose, in a tone that disarmed the jealousy of her lover.

But as she went on in her story a light seemed to

break in on her, and she exclaimed, "And after all, I believe it was Prince Julian in your coat!"

The stories he had heard at the masquerade came into Philip's head. He asked if anybody had called at her mother's to offer her money—if any gentleman was much about Milk Street; if she saw any one watching her at church; but to all his questions her answers were satisfactory, and it was impossible to doubt of her total ignorance of all the machinations of the rascally courtiers. He warned her against all the advances of philanthropical and compassionate princes—and as everything was now forgiven, in consideration of the kiss not being wilfully bestowed, he was on the point of claiming for himself the one of which he had been defrauded when his operations were interrupted by an unexpected accident. A man, out of breath with his rapid flight, rushed against them. By the great coat, staff, and horn. Philip recognized his deputy. He, on the other hand, snatched at the silk cloak and hat.

"Ah, sir!" said Philip, "here are your things. I wouldn't change places with you again; I should be no gainer by the exchange."

"Quick, quick!" cried the prince; and in an instant the transformation was complete. Philip was again the watchman; while Rose shrank into a corner frightened at the prince's presence. I promised you a tip, my boy," said the prince, "but, by Jupiter, I haven't my purse with me."

"I've got it here," said Philip, and held it out to him. "You gave it to my bride there; but, please your highness, I must forbid all presents in that quarter."

"My good fellow, keep what you've got, and retire as quick as you can. You are not safe here."

The prince was dying off as he spoke, but Philip held him by the mantle.

"One thing more, my lord, we have to settle," "Run, run! I tell you. They're in search of you."

"I have nothing to run for. But your purse, here—"

"Keep it, I tell you. Fly! for your life!"

"And a billet of Marshal Blakeneswerd's for five thousand florins."

"Ha! What do you know about Marshal Blakeneswerd?"

"He said it was a gambling debt he owed you. He and his lady start to-night for their estate in Poland."

"Are you mad? how do you know that? Who gave you that message for me?"

"And, your highness, the minister of finance will pay all your debts to Abraham Levi and others, if you will use your influence with the king to keep him in office."

"Watchman! you have been tampering with the evil one."

"But I rejected the offer."

"You rejected the offer of the minister?"

"Yes, your highness. And, moreover, I have entirely reconciled the Baroness Bonan with the Chamberlain Pilzou."

"Which of us two is mad or dreaming?"

"Another thing, your highness, Signora Rollina is a perfect jade—I therefore thought her not worthy of your attentions, and put off the meeting to-night at her house."

"Signora Rollina! how did you come to hear of her?"

"Another thing—Duke Herrman is terribly enraged about the business in the cellar. He is going to complain of you to the king."

"The duke! Who told you all that?"

"Himself. You are not secure yet—but I don't think he'll go to the king, for I threatened him with his agreement with the baker's daughter. But he wants to fight you; be on your guard."

"Once for all—do you know how the duke was informed of all this?"

"Through the marshal's wife. She told all, and confessed she had acted the witch in the ghost-raising."

The prince took Philip by the arm. "My good fellow," he said, "you are not a watchman." He drew him close to a lamp, and started when he saw the face of a man unknown to him.

"Who are you?" he enquired in a conciliatory tone, for he felt himself in the stranger's power.

"I am Philip Stark, the gardener, son of old Philip Stark, the watchman," said Philip, quietly.

CHAPTER XIII

"LAY hold on him! That's the man!" cried many voices, and Philip, Rose, and Julian saw themselves surrounded by half-a-score of the police. Rose screamed, but Philip took her hand, and told her not to be alarmed. The prince laid his hand on Philip's shoulder.

"'Tis a bad business," he said, "and you should have escaped when I told you. But don't be frightened—I will answer for you. There shall no harm befall you."

"That's to be seen," said one of the captors. "In the meantime he must come along with us."

"Where to?" inquired Philip; "I am doing my duty. I am watchman of this beat."

"That's the reason we take you—come!"

The prince stepped forward. "Let the man go, good people," he said, and searched in all his pockets for his purse. As he found it nowhere, he was going to whisper to Philip to give it to him, but the police kept them separate.

"Keep them apart!" shouted the sergeant of the party. "The masked fellow must go with us too—forward! march!"

"Not so," exclaimed Philip; "you are in search of the watchman. Here I am. This gentleman has nothing to do with it."

"We don't want any lesson from you in our duty," replied the sergeant; "bring them on."

"The girl, too?" asked Philip; "you don't want her, surely?"

"No, she may go; but we must see her face, and take down her name and residence."

"She is the daughter of widow Bittler," said Philip; and was not a little enraged when the whole party took Rose to a lamp, and gaped and gazed at her beautiful face, all covered with tears and blushes.

"Go home, Rose, and don't be alarmed on my account," said Philip, trying to comfort her; "my conscience is clear."

But Rose sobbed, so as to move the policemen to pity her. The prince, availing himself of this opportunity, attempted to spring out of his captors' hands, but was held fast.

"Holloa!" cried the sergeant, "this fellow's conscience is not quite clear—hold him firm—march!"

"Whither?" said the prince.

"To the minister of police."

"Listen, good people," said Julian, who did not like the turn affairs were taking, as he was anxious to keep his watchman-frolic concealed. "I have nothing to do with this business. I belong to the court. If you force me against my will, you shall repent of it. I will get every one of you imprisoned, and you will do penance for your insolence on bread and water."

"For Heaven's sake, let the gentleman go!" cried Philip. "I give you my word he is a great lord, and will make you repent your conduct. He is —"

"Hush!" interrupted Julian, "tell no human being who I am. Whatever happens, keep my name a secret."

"We do our duty," said the sergeant, "and nobody can punish us for that; we have often had fellows speak as high, and threaten as fiercely; but such tricks won't do—forward!"

While the contest about the prince went on, a carriage with eight horses, with out-riders bearing flambeaux, drove past the church.

"Stop!" said a voice from the carriage as it was passing the crowd of policemen who had the prince in custody.

The carriage stopped. The door flew open, and a gentleman jumped out, with a brilliant star on the breast of his surcoat. He pushed through the party, and examined the prince from head to foot.

"I thought," he said, "I knew the bird by his feathers. Mask, who are you?"

Julian was taken by surprise, for in the inquirer he recognized Duke Herrman.

"Answer me!" roared Herrman, in a voice of thunder.

Julian made signs to the duke to desist, but he pressed the question more vigorously, being determined to find out who it was he had spoken to at the masquerade. He asked the policemen—they stood with heads uncovered, and told him they had orders to bring the watchman instantly before the minister of police. That the person in the mask had given himself out as some great lord of the court, but that they believed that to be a false representation, and had taken him into custody.

"The man is not of the court," answered the duke, "take my word for that. He most unjustifiably made his way into the ball, and passed himself off for Prince Julian. I forced him to unmask, and detected the impostor. I have informed the lord chamberlain of his audacity—off with him, he is a legal prize!"

With these words the duke stalked back to his carriage, and once more recommending them not to let the villain escape, gave orders to drive on.

The prince saw no chance left. To reveal himself now would be to make his night's adventures the talk of the whole city. He thought it better to disclose his cognicito to the chamberlain, or the minister of the police. "Since it must be so, come on, then!" he said, and the party marched forward, keeping a steady hand on the prisoners.

CHAPTER XIV

PHILIP was not sure whether he was bewitched, or whether the whole business was not a dream. He had nothing to blame himself for, except that he had changed clothes with the prince, and then, whether he would or no, been forced to support his character. When they came to the palace of the police minister he felt more assured. Julian spoke a few words to a young nobleman, and immediately the policemen were sent away; the prince ascended the stairs, and Philip had to follow.

"Fear nothing," said Julian, and left him. Philip was taken to a little ante-room, where he had to wait a good while. At last one of the royal pages came to him, and said, "Come this way, the king will see you."

Philip was distracted with fear. His knees shook so that he could hardly walk. He was led into a splendid chamber. The old king was sitting at a table, and laughing long and loud; near him stood Julian without a mask. Besides these there was nobody in the room.

The king looked at Philip, who had laid off his great coat, with a good-humoured expression. "Tell me all—without missing a syllable—that you have done to-night."

Philip took courage from the condescending goodness of the old king, and told the whole story from beginning to end. He had the good sense, however, to conceal all he had heard among the courtiers that could turn to the prejudice of the prince. The king laughed again, and at last took two gold pieces from his pocket and gave them to Philip. "Here, my friend, take these, but not a word of your night's adventures. No harm shall come of them to you. Now go, my friend, and remember what I have told you."

Philip knelt down at the king's feet and kissed his hand. When he stood up and was leaving the room, Prince Julian said, "I humbly beseech your majesty to allow the young man to wait a few minutes outside. I have some compensation to make him for the inconvenience he has suffered."

The king nodded his smiling assent, and Philip left the apartment.

"Prince!" said the king, holding up his forefinger in a threatening manner to his son, "as well you told me nothing but the truth. For this time I must pardon your wildness, but if such a thing happens again you will offend me seriously. I must take Duke Herrman in hand myself. I shall not be sorry if we can get quit of him. As to the minister of finance and police, I must have further proofs of what you say. Go now, and give some presents to the gardener. He has shown more discretion in your character than you have in his."

The prince took leave of the king, and having carried Philip home with him, made him go over—word for word—everything that had occurred. When Philip had finished his narrative, the prince clapped him on the shoulder and said:

"You've acted my part famously. All that you have done I highly approve of, and ratify every arrangement you have made, as if I myself had entered into it. But, on the other hand, you must take all the blame of my doings with the horn and staff. As a punishment for your verses you shall lose your office as watchman. You shall be my gardener from this date, and have charge of my two gardens at Heimblen and Quellenthal. The money I gave your bride shall be kept as her marriage portion, and I give you the order of Marshal Blakeneswerd for five thousand florins, as a mark of my regard. Go now; be faithful and true. The adventures of the New Year's night have made Prince Julian your friend."

J. W. B.

THE lady, resident at Torquay, who it will be remembered, became so great an admirer of Mr. Disraeli, is just dead, and has left a very handsome legacy to the right honourable gentleman. The amount of the legacy, we believe, is £40,000, and Mr. Disraeli is also appointed sole executor under the will of the deceased. The lady was in no way related to the great Conservative leader, but was an entire stranger to him.

ADDITIONAL MAILS FOR NEW ZEALAND.—An agreement for a contract for five years for a monthly line of mail steamers between Panama and New Zealand, has just been completed between the Hon. Crosbie Ward, on behalf of the colony, and the directors of the intercolonial Royal Mail Steam Packet Company, which for some time past has had a line of steamers between Australia and New Zealand. The time to be occupied between New Zealand and Panama is 30 days, under penalty for excess and bonus for shorter periods, and the subsidy is to be £7,600 per annum for the entire route, comprising Panama, New Zealand and Sydney, guaranteed by the Colony of New Zealand alone. The service is to commence about 1st January, 1865, and it will complete the circle of British Mail steam-services around the globe.



[BRINGING IN THE CHRISTMAS PUDDING.]

THE CHRISTMAS DINNER.

THIS is so great, so important a subject, that it must be approached with deliberation. Materfamilias alone knows what anxieties have attended the preparation of this stupendous feast. We will suppose, which is not always the case, that she is blessed with abundant pecuniary resources; that at the butcher's, and the grocer's, and the greengrocer's, and the poultryer's, her credit is good, or if she does not require that social accommodation called credit, she has a long purse and a generous heart, and is willing to pay freely out from both. Shall it be a turkey, or shall it be a goose? One it must be, for though a sucking pig, or two or three pairs of ducks may be preferred by some people, custom has ruled that turkey or goose shall keep the huge ribs of beef in countenance. Generally speaking, the lordly turkey is the favourite with those who have a tendency to biliousness; while the more greasy goose is affected by the happy possessors of strong stomachs. Materfamilias has here to exercise considerable judgment. How many bilious, and how many strong-stomached people are likely to sit at her table? And then that awful question of the onions arises!

So materfamilias decides upon a turkey, discarding the idea of truffles with a wise horror of indigestion, and relying upon sausages as a fitting concomitant. We will say nothing of fish, for, although we are told that, in the olden time,

Lastly, the salmon, king of fish.

Fills with good cheese the Christmas dish,

the salmon appears to have ceased to observe Christmas by being eaten, wisely keeping the festival in salt-water, and amalgamating kindly with lobster-sauce at a more genial period.

The great Turkey versus Goose question being settled in favour of turkey, the next thing to be considered is the beef. We all know what Christmas beef is, and we are well aware that what the prudent housewife would discard for undue fatness at ordinary times, she takes willingly enough at Christmas. And what is she to do? Fat is a Christmas institution!

And then the plum-pudding! What anxieties attend upon this goodly feature of the Christmas board! Homer, had he lived to see such a thing, might have catalogued its many ingredients as he did the ships at the siege of Troy. Tupper might have sung them in another volume of "Proverbial Philosophy." Over the cauldron, in which this toothsome globe of sweets is undergoing ebullition, Time stands with his hour-glass, prepared to cut the strings at the proper moment, and say "It is done!" And what a moment is that when the pudding is "turned out." Gradually, and with caution, is it released from the cloth that has given it form. Ah! there it is! intact, globose, a mottled beauty that is, in itself, a Christmas triumph!

We may now be supposed to have our Christmas dinner on the table. All the guests have arrived, for nobody thinks of being late on Christmas day. With the exception of two or three especial friends, we are a strictly family party. We seem all fathers and

mothers, and uncles and aunts, and sons and daughters and brothers and sisters, and cousins. Even the two or three friends have achieved a sort of relationship to us, by the grace of Christmas. We all smile and rub our hands, and have an appearance of getting comfortably warm, which is strictly reasonable. We are unanimous in taking turkey first, and all but the frenzied members of the family are unanimous in taking beef second. The boys have had so much beef at the Grind-em-up Academy, that they look upon the magnificent joint with stern dislike, while, having had no turkey during the last "half," they pay their devotion to that hapless bird without mercy. Then might be

Served up salmon, venison, and wild boar,
By hundreds, and by dozens and by scores,
Hogheads of honey, kilderkins of mustard,
Muttons, and fatted heaves, and bacon swine,
Herons and bitterns, peacocks, swan, and bustard,
Tort, mallard, pigeons, widgeons, and in fine,
Plum-puddings, pancakes, apple-pies and custard,
And therewithal they drank good Gascon wine,
With mead, and ale, and cider of our own,
For porter, punch, and negus were not known.

After some little dallying with side-dishes, pudding comes up! Pudding has a sprig of holly, with a flag-leaf, and a few berries stuck on its very summit, as though to say "no surrender!" Look at the children's eyes as they regard that steaming and richly-coloured globe of sweets. They have often eaten plum-pudding; but this is a Christmas pudding. In the lone watches of the night, waking up and thinking of it, for they knew it was in the copper, they listened and heard a rumbling, babbling sound, which no pudding but a Christmas pudding could have produced. They went to sleep again, and dreamt of it. In these dreams the pudding was metamorphosed. The cloth wouldn't hold it. First it swelled out, and became one of those large school-globes, the "use" of which had caused them so many anxious school-hours. Then it was a balloon, ridiculously flattened at the poles, with the plums coming out of the silk, and the candied peel twisting about after them. Then it collapsed altogether, and the dreamers were swimming for dear life to get out of it to dry land. Ultimately, they regarded it from a safe distance, as "something that was loved and lost," and for a time the glory of Christmas had departed. But when they woke in the morning, and found that all their fancies were but dreams, they rejoiced greatly, and looked forward to — well, they looked forward to dinner-time!

The Christmas that comes most home to our hearts is the Christmas in the country—Christmas in a grand old gabled house, bright and warm with red brick-work, and sheltered by noble trees that stretch out their snow-covered arms in stately companionship! The woodlands and the park are one white irregular expanse till they touch the sky-line; the lake is frozen hard, and just above its surface can be seen the outline of the ice-bound boat, on the snow-covered gulf of which stands a solitary robin, piping its familiar note.

How hospitable the grand old house looks, the red, glowing logs on the hearth sending a ruddy welcome through the broad windows, and recalling to our minds the days of old, when the yule and the wassail-bowl, and the boar's head and the venison pastry were familiar things; when, in that long, stately hall, with the two huge open fireplaces, Sir Roger de Coverley was danced in buckled shoes, and silk stockings, and laced coat, and a periwig, and when, though the ladies wore hoops and buffeted them about against their partners, the word crinoline was unknown? Such a house seemed to say for its host:

For I have here two knives in store
To lend to him that wanteth one.

All these Christmas customs seem to be closely connected with such a house as I have described; for at such a house there is room to be jolly—room to serve up great meals, each a procession in itself, and brought in with all the pomp and circumstance of middle-age profusion.

In such a house, what a grand ceremony is that of "bringing in the pudding!" when the tallest and strongest of the domestics is charged to bear it high aloft, so that it may be seen by all in its royal progress to the dinner-table. The great problem is to get well over the "master's" shoulders and to deposit it neatly before him; for on Christmas day the largest tables seem to be always well occupied, and there is not much room to spare.

Let us now glance at that most pleasant of all Christmas harbingers, the holly! The holly never fails us. In plantation or hedgerow, in the broad arable fields or the dense woods, the holly is growing and ripening for Christmas. The mistletoe is a retiring plant, and grows chiefly in secluded places; but all over the country the holly-bush lends its rich red and deep-toned green to enhance the beauty of the winter landscape. And the holly in Covent Garden at Christmas time, when the picturesque market is one huge bower, fragrant with winter perfumes, and bright with



[CHRISTMAS AT COVENT GARDEN MARKET.]

Christmas vegetation! Covent Garden is always a pleasant place to look upon, but at Christmas it is absolutely inspiring. The country seems to have swooped down and taken possession of it, covered it up with a rich array of bright green leaves, and made it a veritable oasis in the wilderness of brick and mortar around!

And the labyrinth of the interior, the walks between pyramids of luscious oranges, and piquant-smelling lemons, and rosy-cheeked apples, and huge baskets of nuts, and boxes of figs, and long, tapering, jargonell pears, telling of many a well-filled dessert-table, and, sad to say, of now and then an over-filled stomach! It seems strange that after Christmas the lofty proprietors of those shops in the central aisle do not retire upon little fortunes, so much do they seem to sell, and so completely aristocratic are the prices at which their tempting wares are ticketed.

But the holly which, gathered together at Covent Garden, is sundered into likely bushes, and, by means of greengrocer and costermonger, distributed amongst so many homes! Cheering is the sound of "holly, holly!" as the rickety cart rumbles through the street; and the leather-lunged "coster" is a moving Birnam wood, bent upon some domestic Dunsinane, where the windows and the walls are as yet ungarnished. "Holly, holly!" he cries, with his hand to his cheek as a sound conductor, and, with one eye upon his lagging pony, and the other upon that decent housewife with her bare arms under her apron, who calls out "holly!" as though it were a name that had been given to the costermonger by his godfathers and godmothers. Of course she completes a bargain, and then comes that important matter of taste, the hanging. "Bringing home the holly" may be an engrossing Christmas ceremony, but hanging it about the house when it is brought home is the ceremony upon which most pains are expended. Some are lavish of it about the mantel-piece, others display a fondness for framing the pictures with it; while to those who like to let their neighbours see that they are good Christmas merry-makers, the windows appear to offer the most likely accommodation.

And then, where is the mistletoe to be hung? We recollect a misanthropical, middle-aged female, of course unblest with marriageable daughters, who always had the mistletoe hung from the chandelier immediately over the dining-table, and so defied anything

like comfortable kissing under it. But great was her horror to find, upon one occasion, two ardent lovers of eighteen or thereabouts, seated on opposite sides of the table, knocking their heads together beneath the mystical bough! Tradition says that the straight-laced, middle-aged lady was remarkably severe upon the young people, and truth obliges us to add that, either as the result of her severity, or from some other cause, they were married and had mistletoe hung in their own house the very next Christmas.

OUR CHRISTMAS STORY.

THE DARK DAYS BEFORE CHRISTMAS.

A STORY IN FOUR PARTS.—PART II.

CHAPTER V. ANOTHER FUGITIVE.

WHEN the roysterers at the Greyhound had stared long enough at the church and the churchyard to satisfy themselves that there was nothing in that direction left to gaze at, they changed front, and formed an excited circle around the landlord.

The landlord looked blank, but feeling that it was necessary to say something, he exclaimed, with an oracular but resigned air:

"There'll be murder done to-night, I'm thinking!"

"Murder!" said Diggle.

"Yes; if they run him down."

"Who is he? What is it all about?" inquired Mr. Grumford, now that he had recovered his breath and his confidence.

"I know no more than any of you. I only know that from the first I felt suspicious of him, and that I had my doubts about his sleeping in the bed he ordered."

"Oh, he ordered a bed, did he?" said Diggle. "I fancy you've had a narrow escape of being robbed and murdered yourself!"

At this moment the circle was joined by the individual who had been so busily engaged in watching the stranger on his arrival. He was an ill-favoured, uncouth-looking old man, hideously thin and wrinkled, with small, lustreless grey eyes, and a wheezy, tremulous voice. He was a native of Crayfield, a hanger-on upon people's charity, and the only occupation he seemed to have was to linger about gates and thresholds, pulling his ragged forelocks to the passers-by.

He was known in the village as Sam—"old Sam"—and from the way in which he was barked at and

baited by the dogs, to his other titles was added that of "Badger."

The dogs somehow saw into his nature, and treated him accordingly; and the men took a hint from the dogs.

"Measter," he said, making his way towards the landlord, "may I have a word wi' ye?"

There was a mysterious solemnity in his manner that suited the occasion, so the little, excited crowd made way for him.

"A word with me?" returned the landlord; "and what about?"

The old man put his skinny finger to his lip, and beckoned mine host away.

"Why, what is it now, Badger?" said Diggle.

"Have you got your nose into the mess yonder?"

"Never you mind," replied old Sam, with some importance. "I've got summat to say to measter landlord."

The host humoured him, and walked aside.

"Now, what is it, Sam?" he asked.

"It's this. You'd like to know, perhaps, who that was you had in the room just now?" whispered the old man.

"Well, perhaps I should."

"Then just stoop down a little, and I'll tell 'ee."

The landlord leant to the old man's face, listened a moment, then, suddenly starting, said:

"Good Heavens! And you're certain of it?"

"Sartin enough. I've watched him from the first minute he coom in."

"But it's been always given out that he was dead—died abroad."

"Aye," said Sam, with a sly chuckle. "People o' that sort ain't wanted to live, you know. It might be unpleasant for other people. But I reckon, he'll be a pretty Christmas-box for 'em up yonder."

And he pointed in the direction of the Gables.

"What with the weddin' so near, and all," he continued, "and everything so comfortable like? It's very shocking for 'em isn't it?"

And a sardonic grin lighted up the old man's withered countenance.

"Now, if the others had the pistol," he went on, "and was to use it, you know, the squire might like it all the better."

"Hush, Sam," said the landlord; "you're going a little too far, I think. Let me advise you to keep what you know to yourself. It'll come out quite soon enough."

"Aye, master, that it will!" exclaimed Sam, rubbing his hands. "And what a mess it'll make of all the fun we're to have?"

By this time, the impatient outsiders could no longer contain their curiosity. They gradually edged towards the old man, and the host; and the ears of Wiggles were sharp enough to catch the last words uttered.

"I'll make a mess of the fun, will it?" he said, tweaking Sam by the ear. "What is it, you old sly-boots? whispering's not right in company, you know."

The old man drew back angrily. His ears were his own property, he thought, and he was sensitive at their being touched.

"Keep your hands off, Master Wiggles," he said. "I ain't a barber's block, to be handled!"

"Bravo, Badger!" exclaimed one of the company; "and you don't want your hair cut for Christmas, do you?"

"What hair I've got," retorted the old man, fiercely, "is my own, and my ears is my own. And what I've heard with my ears, and seen with my eyes, ain't for a pack o' fools to be told."

"Not if it's to be shook out of you?" said a burly young farmer, irritated at the word "fools," and coming forward.

"No, not if it's to be shook out of me!" replied the old man defiantly. "I ain't a dog, you know, and I ain't to be shook!"

The burly young farmer had been imbibing too freely in the parlour of the Greyhound, and he was quarrelsome in his cups.

"You beggar, you!" he said, suddenly catching the old man by the collar, "you're not so good as a dog! Now, tell us what you've been whispering about, or I'll choke you!"

The landlord now interposed.

"Heathfield," he said, "let him go! Don't be silly, man!"

Old Sam was fumbling in his pocket. His dull grey eyes were lighted up with passion.

"Let me go—let me go!" he cried, "or I'll—"

A dozen hands were upon Heathfield, while the landlord did his best to take the old man from the farmer's sturdy grasp. After a short struggle, their efforts were successful, but Heathfield's fingers sought his side, and he staggered, and turned pale.

"Heavens! What's this?" exclaimed the landlord, as he looked at the farmer's hand.

There was blood trickling between the fingers.

They bore Heathfield into the Greyhound, while old Sam, taking advantage of the confusion, darted off up the dark road.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MEETING IN THE OLD CHALK-PIT.

THE clock at the Greyhound had just struck twelve, and solemnly from the church-tower opposite, came the dull, measured strokes that marked the midnight hour. All Crayfield was asleep, but on the brow of an adjacent upland could be seen one solitary light, dimly gleaming through a bedroom window. In that room, the village surgeon was at the bedside of the young farmer, and medical science was struggling with nature for a human life!

The wind, which had been veering about, during the day, now blew steadily from the north-east, and a heavy fall of snow gradually encrusted the fields, and hedges, and lanes with one glaring white sheet.

It was bright moonlight, and but for the steady, blinding curtain of snow, the prospect would have been as visible as in full day.

Gradually the old church-tower, about which the ivy grew in parasitic plenteousness, assumed a thick white coating, and about the edges of the decaying tombstones the snow clung like a pall. On the hill above the village the gables of the manor-house grew whiter and more white, till the outline of the old mansion was rounded into wintry beauty.

It was wholesome Christmas weather; but, on such a night, it was well to have good stout walls around us—in other words, to be at home.

And for those to whom "home" is an unfamiliar word—and there are many such—it was a night of chill, biting, misery! That fine, bracing Christmas weather, which, with a coal-fire, a snug room, and a liberal table in prospect, we congratulate each other upon, and rub our hands about, and maintain is so healthy, is all but death to the fugitive, the wanderer, and the pariahs of our social system.

In town, these hapless units of the great human family crouch beneath doorways, and at the inhospitable portals of workhouses, and cling miserably together for the support of mutual wretchedness. There is some life about—in the gaslight, in the occasional tread of the hurrying passer-by, or even in the measured tramp of the policeman.

But in the country, where the wind has full play, and the snow comes down straight, and sharp, and cutting, and the only refuge is a hedge, or the outside of a barn, or the shelter of a hayrick, this fine Christ-

mas weather is all but death to the homeless. Just such weather as this prevailed at Crayfield.

Beyond the church, those well-hedged fields, uplands, and fat meadows, which make Kent the "Garden of England," were one desolate expanse of snow, across which the breeze blew with true wintry vigour. The ploughed lands were one white sheet, the quick hedges but a white border, the pathways obliterated, and only a rising mass of white marked the vicinity of wood and plantation.

The prospect was desolate, indeed!

But there was one exception to this apparently shelterless and snowbound prospect. About a mile from Crayfield, and away from the high road, a clump of trees marked the brow of a hill, and on the leeward-side of this clump of trees an exhausted chalk-pit formed a deep hollow. The sides of this hollow were thick with brushwood, which intercepted the snow in its descent, and with a few stunted bushes on the lower ground made a passably dry refuge. Indeed, a family of gipsies, with the appliances and ingenuity of their tribe, had made that hollow a snug summer habitation.

As the Crayfield church clock struck twelve, and its solemn chime was borne upon the wind, a solitary individual, almost as white as the landscape, leant upon the dilapidated rail that overhung the chasm, and looking down into the obscurity, paused for a moment to reconnoitre.

"Ah!" he said, brushing the snow from his face, and shaking off the white flakes that hung about him; "they'll hardly double back here. I'll try it."

And stepping over the rail, he caught at the brushwood, and commenced the descent.

The snow fell about him in his progress, and he slipped now and then, but presently he was safe at the bottom of the hollow, and at liberty to look around.

It was not a shelter to be despised on such a night. The chalk had been so well excavated as to leave a wide chamber, with something of a gothic arch at the entrance, over which the brushwood hung like a curtain, and effectually kept out the wind and the driving snow. The air seemed even warm, by contrast, as the fugitive entered the natural cavern, and when he found that he could stand upright in the place, perfectly sheltered, and with a dry bed of earth beneath him, he experienced a sudden revulsion of feeling that made him even lively.

"I could hardly mistake the place," he said. "It seems but yesterday that I gathered blackberries and took birds' nests here!"

Something caught his ear at that moment. He listened. Was it the wind sighing amongst the brushwood?

No, that sound was a human footstep!

He drew back into the recesses of his hiding-place, and the bright gleams of the moon shone upon the steel barrel of a pistol he took from his breast-pocket.

Then he listened again. He distinctly heard the brushwood above him agitated as though by some one descending. Indeed, the snow-flakes fell before the entrance to the cavern, at regular intervals, and could be displaced by none but living agency.

What was it?

There was a pause, and all was quiet. The snow-flakes ceased to fall, and the intruder, whoever he was, had apparently halted.

The hidden fugitive held his breath, and looked out into the white expanse of the pit. He could see nothing but the snow coming down in dreary monotony.

Presently his quick ear caught the sound of a human voice. It was a low wail of exhaustion. And then right down before the mouth of the cavern dropped a knife! As it lay upon the snow, he could distinctly see a red stain upon it!

It was a stain of blood!

The fugitive shuddered. It was a strange messenger, and an evil omen, lying there right before him, unaccounted for, and yet seeming to come from human hands! He drew himself up more closely into the cavern, and waited in breathless anxiety.

Presently the brushwood was agitated anew, and more snow-flakes fell in thick, regular masses. It was now plain enough that the chalk-pit was to have another tenant.

Convinced of this, the fugitive crept stealthily out of the cavern, and, crouching in the shadow of a stunted bush, looked upward. He then saw an ill-clad and feeble-looking old man, laboriously descending by the very path he had himself taken; and in another moment he and the now-comer were on a level at the bottom of the pit!

The fugitive was satisfied. It was not one of the two men who had followed him into the commercial room at the Greyhound.

The old man, as soon as he had reached the bottom of the chalk-pit, saw the knife he had dropped, and picking it up carefully, wiped it in the snow. Then,

examining it closely for a moment, he thrust it into the earth, again and again, as though to cleanse it. But the blade still came out with the red stain upon it! "Dang the knife!" he exclaimed, and flinging it to the extreme end of the cavern, looked about for a resting-place.

The stranger, who had been closely watching his new companion, then came out of his seclusion, and grasping the old man firmly by the shoulder, said:

"What the matter friend? You choose a strange lodging."

"God, ha' mercy on me!" cried old Sam—for it was he. "What—what art thou, mon?"

"Keep your tongue quiet," said the stranger, "and you'll be safer. Who are you, and what do you want here? Speak low!"

"I'm a poor wretched creature, seeking a night's shelter."

"Is that all?"

"All, as I'm a living man!"

"And yet, more seeking shelter, you carry about with you a knife stained with blood!"

And the stranger pointed to the interior of the cavern.

The old man trembled violently.

"What knife?" he said.

"The knife you wiped in the snow and threw there!"

Old Sam turned towards the place indicated, stooped down and groped about for a time. When he had concluded his search, he said, with an assumption of confident familiarity:

"Well, you see, I likes to keep my little bits o' things clean; and though it was only a hare, you know, blood's blood, and a very queer sort of stuff to carry about wi' one!"

"Oh, a hare, was it?" said the stranger, curiously.

"Yes, measter, a hare. Lor! how the creature did cry, to be sure; and then I saw them two a-comin' over the field yonder, or I should have had 'un here now!"

"Which two?"

"Why, them two chaps from the Greyhound."

"And are they near here?"

"Lord knows!" said the old man, "but they were not far off when I last saw 'em. Hark—hush!"

There was a hush in the wind; and a prolonged shout, answered by a voice somewhat more distant, could plainly be heard by the two fugitives.

"They're down," said the old man, listening attentively, "in Two-acre Copee. You could all but throw a stone to 'em, if you were so minded. In another minute they'll be here!"

The stranger looked the old man steadily in the face.

"You seem," he said, "to know something of what took place at the Greyhound. You saw the man that escaped from them there—the man they are now seeking?"

"I did."

"And you would know him again?"

"As well as I know you."

"Indeed!"

"Aye, measter! I've not lived, man and boy, for fifty years in Crayfield and don't know Squire Markham's brother when I see him, as I do you, standing right afore me! But, hist, d'ye hear that?"

There was a crackling of branches above them, as though some one was trying to find a footing.

The stranger crept out and looked up through the brambles that overhung the cavern.

Two men were standing at the edge of the hollow, scanning it closely and whispering together.

The stranger returned noiselessly to his hiding-place. "I'll wait!" he muttered in an undertone.

It was evident that the pursuers scarcely relished the descent, though, from their demeanour, they seemed confident that they had tracked out the fugitive. They could see that the snow was newly trampled down, and the bushes recently disturbed, and their unerring instinct smelt out the retreat in an instant.

What was to be done?

The sides of the chalk-pit were steep and precipitous, and, except at the spot where they now stood, bare of vegetation. The only path to the bottom was the path before them.

In this extremity, the two men took counsel together. Although they could not get at the rat, the trap was fast enough. Satisfied of this, they walked round to the opposite side, and their muffled tramp on the thick, soft snow, could be plainly heard by the refugees beneath.

At this moment, the church clock at Crayfield struck one! It would be six or seven hours before daybreak, and the possible arrival at the spot of some of the villagers. The two men were puzzled.

Suddenly a *ruse* occurred to them.

"Well," said one, loudly, "I suppose the job must be given up. I'm sick of it, for my part. He's bested us this round, anyhow."

"Got away, clean, I expect!" said the other. "We'd better go back to the village and get a night's rest."

And they struck off in the direction of Crayfield.

The stranger listened attentively to the sound of their retreating footsteps, and when he had satisfied himself that they were really at some little distance, he took a flask from his pocket, uncorked it, and after drinking, passed it to his shivering companion.

"Take a draught of that!" he said. "It'll warm you."

The old man took the flask greedily, and smacked his lips as he returned it to its owner.

"Now," said the stranger, musingly, "is it better to stay here and be taken, like a rat in a trap, or to make a dash for it?"

The old man made no reply, but looked greedily at the flask, which now was his chief attraction. The strong, raw spirit, had made his eyes blink, and given him courage a flip. He held out his hand as the stranger was about to return the flask to his pocket.

"Another scoop, measter?" he said, resuming his old habit, and pulling his forelock. "It's a mortal bad night, you know."

The flask was passed to him in silence, and while he was drinking, the stranger walked out into the snow, and looked up.

He could hear nothing. Had they gone to the village?

The old man, unnaturally excited by the brandy—for he had emptied the flask—now came out to him.

"They've gone, measter, have they?" he whispered, chuckling feebly.

"Perhaps," said the stranger.

He then took one step towards making the ascent. The bushes cracked under his feet, and he paused. Then he took another step, and listened. And so, working his way up, he reached the edge of the pit.

His eyes were on a level with the ground, and as he looked along the plateau of snow, he fancied that, against the hedge bounding the field, he saw something darker than the general prospect. At this moment, the old man, who was scrambling up after him, fell back with a cry of pain, and a heavy "thud" in the snow beneath told that he had landed at the bottom.

The stranger cleared the edge of the pit, and stood in the field. He then saw his two pursuers coming rapidly up the hill.

In an instant he was flat on the ground, and, creeping behind the clump of trees, managed to conceal himself.

The pursuers came rushing up, sure this time of their prey. Again baffled, they were about closely to inspect the clump of trees, when they heard a deep groan from the pit beneath.

They listened, and a feeble, husky voice, muttered: "God help me—I'm a dead man!"

"Safe enough now!" said one of them. "He must have tumbled back when we missed him!"

The descent, which was dangerous, with a determined man awaiting them, was easy now, with a poor maimed wretch lying groaning, a ready captive to their hands. So they scrambled down boldly enough.

They reached the bottom of the pit safely, and approaching the groaning figure, turned him over in the snow, till the full moonlight shone upon his face.

It was old Sam, and he was dying fast.

CHAPTER VII

MORE NEWS FOR THE BARBER.

WIGGLES, the barber, was very busy in his shop the morning after the strange events that had happened at the Greyhound, for all the gossip of Crayfield came in to obtain authentic accounts of the unwonted scenes that had disturbed the ordinary quiet of the neighbourhood.

A barber's shop is prescriptively the place for news, and to this particular barber's shop was added the attraction of a barber who really knew something of what he had to talk about—an advantage not possessed by barbers in general. Wiggles was, indeed, on that morning, a newspaper in himself: and as he was to be read and examined for nothing (or in the case of those who were shaved, for next to nothing) his circulation—figuratively speaking—was tremendous!

As fresh customers, eager for information, came in, he felt himself going through "second editions" innumerable, until, in very exhaustion, he was almost inclined to stop the press.

But a barber is but a man, and a man with news is seldom inclined to hide his light under a bushel. He likes to be pumped, and it takes a good deal of exertion to pump him dry.

This, at least, was the case with Wiggles. He was a man with a great flow of words, and might, under

other circumstances, have been distinguished as an "accident-maker" for the newspapers. But being only a barber—and a village barber, too—his genius was cramped, and his reputation purely local.

He had opened his shop early that morning, for, as it was Christmas time, he felt it a duty he owed to himself and to society to make his place as gay and seasonable as his limited means would afford. He had a number of little bottles on shelves in his window, containing variously coloured oleaginous matters that never seemed to sell; and a partly waxen figure with a bald head and a strikingly pink complexion—of which he was very proud—occupied the post of honour between several cakes of soap that the flies had marked for their own.

These things were to be dusted and re-arranged, and to be festooned about with holly and laurel. The waxen doll was to have a green wreath about her bare scalp, and a stomach of leaves and berries on her cardboard bust; while the scented soaps were to be set off with prickly borders, and the bottles of fat made attractive by bay-leaves and cut paper. Indeed, Wiggles prided himself on making his shop look "Christmas-like" at Christmas, and emulating, as far as he could, the more enticing display of the village grocer.

His preparations, however, which would have been duly noticed at any other time, were forgotten by his customers in the excitement of the news he had to retail to them; and it was as much as he could do to shave them—so often did their mouths open with questions about the overnight's events.

"And who could he have been?" said one individual under the razor, and in imminent danger of having part of his nose sliced off—"that's what puzzles me, Master Wiggles."

"I've a suspicion," said Wiggles oracularly, and taking the head off a small pimple belonging to his customer.

"Have you?"

"I have."

"And you think it was—"

"I do," replied Wiggles, without waiting for the sentence to be finished.

"Then it was—"

"I'm afraid so," interrupted the barber, taking the merest edge off a wrinkle. "But he cut away so sharp that—"

Here the unfortunate man who was being shaved started up, and putting his hand to his cheek, said,

"Why, you're cutting me, Wiggles!"

The barber passed the razor several times, with the greatest coolness, over the palm of his hand, and then awaiting the return of his customer to the chair, said:

"You've a very delicate skin, you see. But I'm perfectly convinced that that man was no other than John Markham."

"John Markham! I always thought he was dead!"

"My dear sir," said Wiggles, applying a piece of his customer's beaver to the wrinkle that had lost its covering, "when one's friends feel inclined to cut one—"

"Yes," said the customer, feelingly.

"They bury one alive, as it were—you understand me? They're not particular as to the breath being out of one's body first."

"Not at all."

"And there are circumstances, you know, in this case that make it quite as well that John Markham should be dead. You recollect, some fourteen or fifteen years ago, there was a mysterious business up at the Gables yonder?"

"Yes," said the listener, eagerly, and leaving his chair, for the shaving had come to an end.

"And you, no doubt, recollect what happened at the Maidstone assizes?"

"As well as if it was only yesterday. There was Mr. Vincent Markham in the court, and Agnes, who's now up there, and who was then a little golden-haired thing of five years old or so, prattling on her mother's knee, in the carriage outside; the poor lady all the while pale, anxious and trembling—"

"And you remember," interrupted the barber, who felt that the bread, or rather the story, was being taken out of his mouth, "what, when the foreman of the jury said, 'We find the prisoner guilty, my lord!' were John Markham's words?"

The unwilling listener shook his head dolefully.

"Ah, that I do!" he said.

"Well, at those words the squire—"

There was an interruption from the outside at that moment. A hurried shuffling of many feet, and a general turn-out of the villagers, made the barber and his companion rush to the door.

A crumpled-up figure was being borne along on a hurdle. And an old, worn face was suddenly revealed as the keen wind disturbed the handkerchief that covered it.

"Good Heaven!" exclaimed the barber. "It's old Sam!"

Wiggles was now in a critical position. He could

scarcely leave his shop, and for the life of him he could not refrain from joining that melancholy procession. Curiosity prevailed, and taking the key from his pocket, he locked the shop-door, and followed.

Along the narrow village street, the excited crowd pursued their way, jostling each other, and struggling hard to get a glimpse of the deathly mystery. When they reached the church, a halt was made, and the sexton was summoned from a cottage opposite. He appeared, keys in hand, and turning an angle of the churchyard wall, opened the strong, iron-barred door of a desolate-looking hut, in the sides of which were several narrow gratings.

The bearers of the hurdle then advanced, and entered the place, the village constable keeping guard in the door-way against the peering crowd.

Then the hurdle was placed upon the trestles that awaited it and the bearers reappeared. The heavy door was closed again, and the sexton, with his great keys, walked silently away.

After staring at the gratings and the key-hole, as though they could tell something, if they liked, of what was within, the crowd broke up into fragmentary portions. A good many of the curious, however, followed the constable, and among these was the barber.

He had, by virtue of his position, some interest with the representative of order, and he was the first to make the constable speak.

"Yes," said that authority, in reply to a question, "he was dead long afore the doctor saw him. We can't make out yet how it was, and it's a rum story. But we've got the two men that brought us word of him up at the justice's. They tell a queer tale about it all!"

"What do they tell?" asked Wiggles, anxiously.

"If you wish to know, Master Wiggles, you'd better come up to the manor-house. They're being examined now. At any rate, the old man had something about him that one person at the squire's 'll be glad to know of!"

"Papers?" said Wiggles, "or anything of that kind?"

"Aye," replied the officer, "and John Markham's come back—as I hear he has—at the right time."

The barber forgot his shop—forgot the four days' beards that might wait taking off, and started at a trot for the "Gables."

(To be continued)

SELF-MADE;

OR,

"OUT OF THE DEPTHS."

By MISS E. D. E. N. SOUTHWORTH,

Author of "The Hidden Hand," "The Lost Heiress," &c., &c.

CHAPTER LXXXI.

ROMANCE AND REALITY.

If we had heard that she was dead

We hastily had cried,

"She was so richly favoured

God will forgive her pride!"

But now to see her living death—

Power, glory, arts, all gone—

Her empire lost and her poor breath

Still vainly struggling on!

Milnes.

As the vessel steamed on her way, Claudia's spirits rebounded from their depression. She was Lady Vincent, and in the present enjoyment and future anticipation of all the honours of her rank. She gloried in the adulation her youth, beauty, wealth and title commanded from her companions in the steamer; but she gloried more in the anticipation of future successes and triumphs on a larger scale and a more extensive field.

She rehearsed in imagination her arrival in Scotland, and hoped to visit with Lord Vincent all the different seats of his family; and every seat would be the scene of a new ovation! As the bride of the heir she would be idolized by the tenants and retainers of his noble family!

She would, with Lord Vincent make a tour of the country; she would see everything worth seeing in nature, and, by her beauty and her splendour achieve new successes and triumphs! She would overwhelm by her magnificence those who might sneer at that high flavour of Indian blood which had given lustre to her raven hair and fire to her dark eyes! Returning to England after this royal progress, she would pass her days in cherishing her beauty and keeping up her state. And the course of her life should be like that of the sun, beautiful, glorious, regnant—each splendid phase more dazzling than any that had preceded it. Was not this worth the price she paid for it?

Such were Claudia's dreams and visions! Such the scenes that she daily in imagination rehearsed! Such the future life she delighted to contemplate! And nothing—neither the attentions of her husband, the

conversation of her companions, nor the beauty and glory of sea and sky could win her from her contemplation of the delightful subject.

When they landed at Glasgow, Lord Vincent hurried Claudia into a cab, followed her, and gave the direction:

"To the King's Head."

"Why not go to a grander hotel?" said Claudia.

"This will serve our turn," was the curt reply of the viscount.

Claudia looked up in surprise at the brusqueness of his answer, and then ventured the question:

"It is a first-class hotel, of course?"

"Humph!" answered her lordship.

They left the respectable-looking street through which they were driving, and turned into a narrow by-street, and drove through a perfect labyrinth of narrow lanes and alleys, made hideous by dilapidated and dirty buildings and ragged and filthy people, until at last they reached a dark, dingy-looking inn, whose creaking sign bore, in faded letters, the King's Head.

"It is not here that you are taking me, Lord Vincent?" exclaimed Claudia, in surprise and displeasure, as her eyes fell upon this house and sign.

"It certainly is, Lady Vincent," replied his lordship, with cool civility, as he handed her out of the cab.

"Why this—is this worse than the tavern you took me to before! I never was in such a house in all my life!"

"It will have all the attractions of novelty then."

"Lord Vincent, I do beg that you will not take me into this squalid place!" she said, shrinking back.

"You might find less attractive places than this in the length and breadth of the island," he replied, as he drew her hand within his arm and led her into the house.

They found themselves in a narrow passage with stained walls, worn oilcloth, and a smell of meat, onions and tobacco-smoke.

"Oh!" exclaimed Claudia, in irrepressible disgust.

"You will get used to these little inconveniences after a while, my dear," said his lordship.

A man with a greasy white apron and a soiled napkin approached them and bowed.

"A bedroom and parlour; and supper immediately," was Lord Vincent's order to this functionary.

"Yes, sir. We shall be happy to accommodate you, sir, with a bedroom; the parlour, sir, is out of our power; we having none vacant at the present time; but to-morrow, sir—" began the polite waiter, when Lord Vincent cut him short with:

"Show us into the bedroom then."

"Yes, sir." And bowing, the waiter went before them up the narrow stairs, and led them into a dusky, faded, gloomy-looking chamber, whose carpet, curtains, and chair-covers, seemed all of mingled hues, of browns, and greys, and, from their fadedness and dinginess almost indescribable in colour.

The waiter set the candle on the tall wooden mantelpiece and inquired:

"What would you please to order for supper?"

"What will you have, madam?" inquired Lord Vincent, referring to Claudia.

"Nothing on earth, in this horrid place! I am heart-sick!" she added, in a low, sad tone.

"The lady will take nothing. You may send me a beef-steak and a bottle of ale," said his lordship, seeming perfectly careless as to Claudia's want of appetite.

"Yes, sir; shall I order it to be served in the coffee-room?"

"No, send it up here, and don't be long over it."

The waiter left the room. And Lord Vincent walked up and down the floor in the most perfect state of indifference to Claudia's distress.

She threw herself into a chair and burst into tears, exclaiming:

"You do not care for me at all! What a disgusting place to bring a woman, not to say a lady, into! If you possessed the least respect or affection for me you would never treat me so!"

"I fancy that I possess quite as much respect and affection for you, Lady Vincent, as you do, or ever did for me!" he answered.

And Claudia knew that he spoke the truth and she could not contradict him; but she said:

"Suppose there is little love lost between us; still we might treat each other decently. It is infamous to bring me here!"

"You will not be required to stay here long."

"I hope not indeed!"

At this moment the waiter entered to lay the cloth for the viscount's supper.

"What time does the first train for Aberdeen leave?" inquired the viscount.

"The first train, sir, leaves at eight o'clock in the morning, sir; but it is the parliamentary, sir."

"That will do. See if my people have brought my luggage."

"Yes, sir; I beg you pardon, sir, what name?" inquired the perplexed waiter.

"No matter. Go look for a fellow who has in charge a large number of boxes."

The man left the room to do his errand.

But Claudia turned to her husband in astonishment.

"Did I understand you to inquire about the train to Aberdeen?"

"Yes," was the short reply.

"My father and myself certainly understood that I was to go to Edinburgh for a time."

"My dear, we go to Castle Cragg."

"But why could you not have told me that before?"

"My dear, I like to be agreeable. And people who are always setting others right are not so."

"Is Lord Hurst-Moncaux at Castle Cragg?"

"The earl is at Balmoral."

Claudia suspected that he was deceiving her; but she felt that it would do no good to accuse him of deception.

The waiter returned to the room, bringing Lord Vincent's substantial supper arranged on a tray, and was told by him to send up the person with his three servants.

And once more the waiter left the room.

In a few moments Lord Vincent's valet entered.

"Frisbie, we leave for Aberdeen by the eight o'clock train to-morrow morning. See to it."

"Yes, my lord. I beg your lordship's pardon, but is your lordship aware that it is the parliamentary?"

"Certainly; but it is also the first. See that all is ready. And—Frisbie!"

"Yes, my lord."

"Go and engage a first-class carriage for our own exclusive use."

"Yes, my lord," said the man, with his hand still on the door, as if waiting further orders.

"Lord Vincent, I would be obliged if you would tell him to send one of my women to me," said Claudia, coldly.

"Women? Oh! Here, Frisbie, send the females up!"

"I said one of my women, the elder one, he may send."

"Frisbie, send the old one up."

The man went out of the room. And Claudia turned upon her husband:

"Lord Vincent, I do not know in what light you consider it; but I think your conduct shows bad wit and worse manners."

"Lady Vincent, I am sorry you should disapprove of it," said his lordship, falling to upon his beefsteak and ale, the fumes of which soon filled the room.

But that was nothing to what was coming. When he had finished his supper, he coolly took a pipe from his pocket, filled it, and prepared to light it. Then, stopping in the midst of his operations, he looked at Claudia, and inquired:

"Do you dislike tobacco-smoke?"

"I do not know, my lord. No gentleman ever smoked in my presence," replied Claudia, haughtily.

"Oh, then, of course, you don't know, and never will until you try. There is nothing like experiment!"

And Lord Vincent put the pipe between his lips, and puffed away vigorously. The room was soon filled with smoke. That, combined with the smell of the beefsteak and the ale, really sickened Claudia. She went to the window, raised it, and looked out.

"You will take cold," said his lordship.

"I would rather take cold than breathe this air," was her reply.

"Just as you please; but I hadn't," he said, and he went and shut down the window.

Amazement held Claudia still for a moment; she could scarcely believe in such utter disregard of her feelings. At last, in a voice vibrating with ill-suppressed indignation, she said:

"My lord, the air of this room makes me ill. If you must smoke, can you not do so somewhere else?"

"Where?" questioned his lordship, taking the pipe from his mouth for an instant.

"Is there not a smoking-room, reading-room, or something of the sort, for gentlemen's accommodation?"

"In this place? Ha! ha! ha! Well, there's the tap-room!"

"Then why not go there?" inquired Claudia, who had no very clear idea of what the tap-room really was.

Lord Vincent's face flushed at what he seemed to think an intentional affront.

"I can go into the street," he said.

Then he arose and put on his great coat and his cap, and turned up the collar of his coat and turned down the fall of his cap, so that but little of his face would be seen, and so walked out. Then Claudia raised the window to ventilate the room, and rang the bell to summon the waiter.

"Take this service away and send the chambermaid to me," she said to him when he came.

And a few minutes after, he had cleared the table and left the room, the chambermaid, accompanied by old Katy, entered.

"Is there a dressing-room connected with this chamber?" Lady Vincent inquired.

"Law! no, mum, there isn't such a place in the house," said the chambermaid.

"This is intolerable! You may go; my own servants will wait on me."

The girl went out.

"Unpack my travelling-bag, and lay out my things, Katy," said Lady Vincent, when she was left alone with her nurse.

But the old woman raised her hands, and rolled up her eyes, exclaiming:

"Well, Miss Claudia, child!—I mean, my ladyship, ma'am!—if this is Scotland, I never want to see it again the longest day as ever I live!" grumbled old Katy, as she assisted her lady to change her travelling dress for a loose wrapper.

"Now, what have you had to eat, my ladyship?"

"Nothing, Katy. I felt as if I could not eat anything cooked in this ill-looking house."

"Nothing to eat! I'll go right straight downstairs, and make you some tea and toast myself!" said Katy.

And she made good her words by bringing a delicate little repast, of which Claudia gratefully partook.

And then Katy, with an old nurse's tenderness, saw her mistress comfortably to bed, and cleared and darkened the room, and left her to repose.

But Claudia could not sleep. Her thoughts were too busy with the subject of Lord Vincent's strange conduct, from the time that he had received those three suspicious letters up to this time, when, with his face hid, he was walking up and down the streets of Glasgow.

That he sought concealment, she felt assured by many circumstances: his coming to this obscure tavern; his choosing to take his meals and smoke his pipe in his bedroom; and his walking out with his face muffled—all of which were in direct antagonism to Lord Vincent's fastidious habits; and finally his taking a whole carriage in the railway train, for no other purpose than to have himself and his party entirely isolated from their fellow-passengers.

Lord Vincent came in early, and, thanks to the narcotic qualities of the ale, he soon fell asleep.

Claudia had scarcely dropped into a doze, before, they were roused up to get ready for the train. They made a hurried toilet, and ate a hasty breakfast, and then set out for the station.

It was a raw, damp, foggy morning. The atmosphere seemed as dense and as white as milk. No one could see a foot in advance. And Claudia wondered how the cabmen managed to get along at all.

They reached the station just as the train was about to start, and had barely time to hurry into the carriage that had been engaged for them, before the whistle shrieked and they were off. Fortunately Frisbie had sent the luggage on in advance, and got it ticketed.

The carriage had four back and four front seats. Lord and Lady Vincent occupied two of the back seats, and their four servants the front ones. They travelled slowly, and stopped often. And Claudia, in surprise, remarked upon these facts.

"One might as well be in a stage—for speed," she complained.

"It is the parliamentary train," he replied.

"I have heard you say that before; but I do not know what you mean by 'parliamentary' as applied to railway trains."

It is the cheap train, the slow train, the people's train; in fact, one that, in addition to first and second class carriages, drags behind it an interminable length of third class, in which the lower orders travel," said his lordship.

"But why is it called the 'parliamentary'?"

"Because it was instituted by Act of Parliament for the accommodation of the people, or perhaps because it is so heavy and slow."

On they went, hour after hour, stopping every few miles, while the fog seemed still to dense and whiten.

At noon the train reached Perth, and stopped twenty minutes for refreshment. Lord Vincent did not leave the carriage, but sent his valet out to the station restaurant to procure what was needful for the party. And while the passengers were all hurrying to and fro and looking in at the carriage, he drew the curtains of his windows, and sat back far in his seat.

Claudia would gladly have left the train and spent the interval somewhere else.

Lord Vincent assured her there was no time to lose in sight-seeing then, but promised that she should visit that town at some future period. When the journey was resumed Claudia for a time forgot all the suspicions and anxieties that disturbed her mind, and with

all a stranger's interest gazed on the grandeur of the scenery and dreamed over the associations it awakened.

Claudia was entirely lost in gazing on the "mountain majesty," and dreaming of its past history. Here the association between scenery and poetry was perfect. Nature is ever young, and this was the very kind of scenery described by Scott.

There was the sun burnishing the brown tops of the mountains, and shedding light and cheerfulness far and near.

But there is little time for either observation or dreaming in a railway train.

They stopped but a few minutes at another station, and then shot off northward.

When it was growing dark Lord Vincent said: "You had just as well close that window, Claudia; it will give us all cold; and besides, you can see but little now."

"I can see Night drawing her curtain of darkness around the troubled skies. It is worth watching," murmured Claudia, dreamily.

"Ah!" said the viscount, "you will see enough of the north before you have done with it, I fancy." And with an emphatic clap he let down the window.

Claudia shrugged her shoulders and turned away, too proud to dispute a point that she was powerless to decide.

They sped on through the darkness of one of the darkest nights that ever fell. Even had the window been open, Claudia could not have caught a glimpse of the scenery. She had no idea that they were near their destination until the train ran into the station. Then all was bustle among those who intended to get out there.

But through all the bustle Lord Vincent and his party kept their seats.

"I am very weary of this train! I have not left my seat for many hours. Can we not stop over night here? I should like to see this city by daylight?" Claudia inquired.

"What did you say?" asked Lord Vincent, with nonchalance.

Claudia repeated her question, adding:

"I should like to remain a day or two to see a place so celebrated in Scottish history and literature."

"Everything, of course! Bother! We have no time for that! I mean to sleep at Castle Cragg to-night," replied the viscount.

Claudia turned away her head to conceal the indignant tears that arose to her eyes! She was beginning to discover that her comfort, convenience and inclination were just about the last circumstances that her husband was disposed to take into consideration. What a dire reverse for her, whose will, from her earliest recollection, had been the law to all around her!

Fortunately for Claudia, however, the viscount found himself too much fatigued after about sixteen hours' ride to go farther that night. So he directed Mr. Frisbie to engage two cabs to take himself and his party to an hotel.

And when they were brought up he handed Claudia, who was scarcely able to stand, into the first one, and ordered Frisbie to put the servants into the other. And they drove to a fourth or fifth-rate inn, a degree or two dirtier, dingier and darker than the one they had left.

But Claudia was too utterly worn out in body, mind and spirit, to find fault with any shelter that promised to afford her the common necessities of life, of which she had been deprived for so many hours.

She drank the tea that was brought her, without questioning its quality. And as soon as she laid her head on her pillow, she sank into the dreamless sleep of utter exhaustion.

She awoke late the next morning to take her first look at the old town through a driving rain that lashed the narrow windows of her little bedroom. Lord Vincent had already risen and gone out.

She rang for her servants. Old Katy answered the bell, entering with uplifted hands and eyes, exclaiming:

"Well, my ladyship! if this ain't the outlandishest country as ever was! Coming over from t'other side, we had the ocean underneath of us, and now 'pears to me like we has got it overhead of us, by the fog and mist and rain perpetual! And if this is being of lords and ladyships, I'd a heap liefer be misters and mistresses, myself."

"I quite agree with you, Katy," sighed Lady Vincent, as, with the old woman's assistance, she dressed herself.

"It seems to me like as if we was regerlerly sold, my ladyship," said old Katy, mysteriously.

"Hush! Where are we to have breakfast—not in this disordered room, I hope?"

"No, my ladyship. They let us have a squeezed-up parlour that smells for all the world as if a lot of men had been smoking and drinking in it all night long. My lordship's down there, waiting for his breakfast now. Pretty place to fetch a lady into!

Well, one comfort, we won't stay here long, 'cause I heard my lordship order Mr. Frisbie to go and take two inside places and four outside places in the stage-coach as leaves this mornin' for Ban. 'Ban,' 'Ban,' 'pears like it's been all ban and no blessin' ever since we have left Tanglewood."

Lady Vincent did not think it worth while to correct Katy. She knew by experience that all attempts to set her right would be lost labour.

She went down-stairs and joined Lord Vincent in the little parlour where a breakfast was laid, of which it might be said that if the coffee was bad and the bannocks worse, the kippered herrings were delicious.

After breakfast they took their places in or on the Banff mail-coach; Lord and Lady Vincent being the sole passengers inside; and all their servants occupying the outside. And so they set out through the drizzling rain and by the old turnpike-road to Banff.

This road ran along the edge of the cliffs overhanging the sea—the sea, ever sublime and beautiful, even when dimly seen through the dull veil of a Scotch mist.

Claudia was not permitted to open the window; but she kept the glass polished that she might look out upon the wild scenery.

Late in the afternoon they reached the town of Banff; where they stopped only long enough to order a plain dinner and engage flies to take them on to their final destination, Castle Cragg, which, in truth, Claudia was growing very anxious to behold.

CHAPTER LXXXII

CASTLE CRAGG.

The wildest scene, but this, can show
Some touch of nature's genial glow;
But here, above, around, below,
On mountain or in glen,
Nor tree, nor shrub, nor plant, nor flower,
Nor aught of vegetative power
The weary eye may ken.
For all is rocks at random thrown,
Black waves, bare crags, and banks of stone.

Scott.

IMMEDIATELY after dinner they set out again on this last stage of their journey, Claudia and Vincent riding in the first fly, and Frisbie and the women in the second one. The road still lay along the cliffs above the sea. And Claudia still sat and gazed through the window of the fly as she had gazed through the window of the coach, at the wild, grand, awful scenery of the coast. Hour after hour they rode on until the afternoon darkened into evening.

The last object of interest that caught Claudia's attention, before night closed the scene, was far in advance of them up the coast. It was a great promontory stretching far out into the sea, and lifting its lofty head high into the heavens. Upon its extreme point stood an ancient castle, which at that height seemed but a crow's nest in size.

Claudia called Lord Vincent's attention to it.

"What castle is that, my lord, perched upon that high promontory? I should think it an interesting place, an historical place, built perhaps in ancient times as a stronghold against Danish invasion," she said.

"That? Oh, ah, yes; that is a trifle historical, in the record of a score of sieges, storms, assaults, and so on; and a bit traditional, in legends of some hundred capital crimes and mortal sins; and in fact altogether, as you say, rather interesting, especially to you, Claudia. It is Castle Cragg, and it will have the honor to be your future residence."

"Heaven forbid!" exclaimed Claudia, gazing now in consternation upon that drear, desolate, awful rock. "Dread point of Dis" it seemed indeed to her.

"For a season, only, my dear, of course," said the viscount, with the queerest of smiles, of which Claudia could make nothing satisfactory.

She continued to look out, but the longer she gazed upon that awful cliff and the nearer she approached it, the more appalled she became. She now saw, in turning a winding of the coast, that the point of the cliff stretched much further out at sea than had at first appeared, and that only a low neck of land connected it with the main; and she knew that when the tide was high this promontory must be entirely cut off from the coast and become, to all intents and purposes, an island. Approaching nearer still, she saw that the cliff was but a huge, bare, barren rock, of which the castle, built and walled in of the same rock, seemed but an outgrowth and a portion.

If this rock-bound, sea-walled dwelling-place, which had evidently been built rather for a fortification than for a family residence, struck terror to the heart of Claudia, what effect must it have had upon the superstitious mind of poor old Katy, riding in the fly behind, when Mr. Frisbie was so good as to point it out to her with the agreeable information that it was to be her future home!

But the darkening night soon shut out from their

view the awful cliff to which, however, they were every moment approaching nearer.

Fortunately, as the carriages reached the base of this cliff, the tide was low, and they were enabled to pass the neck of land that united the island to the coast, and made it a promontory.

After passing over this narrow strip, they ascended the cliff by a road so steep that it had been paved with flag-stones, placed edgewise, to afford a hold for the horses' hoofs, and aid them in climbing. It was too dark to see all this then; but Claudia knew from the inclined position of the carriage how steep was the ascent, and she held her very breath for fear. As for old Katy, in the carriage behind, her terror was indescribable.

A solitary light shone amid the darkness above them. It came from a lamp at the top of the castle-gate. They reached the summit of the cliff in safety, and Lady Vincent breathed freely again.

They crossed the drawbridge over the ancient moat and entered the castle-gate. The light above it revealed the ghastly, iron-toothed portcullis, that looked ready to fall and impale any audacious passenger under its impending fangs. And they entered the old paved court-yard and crossed over to the main entrance of the castle hall.

Here at length, some of the attendant honours of Lady Vincent's new rank seemed ready to greet her.

The establishment had been expecting its lord, and had heard the sound of carriages. The great doors were thrown open; lights flashed out; liveried servants appeared in attendance.

"You got my telegram, I perceive, Cuthbert," Lord Vincent said to large, red-haired Scot, in plain citizen's clothes, who seemed to be the porter.

"Yes, my laird, though, as ye ken, the chieftains at you office at Banff, had to send it by a special messenger—sae it took a lang time to win here."

"All right, Cuthbert, since you received it in time to be ready for us. Light us into the green parlour, and send the housekeeper here to attend Lady Vincent."

"Yes, my laird," answered the man, bowing low before he led the way into a room so elegantly furnished as to afford a pleasant surprise to Claudia, who certainly did not expect to find anything so bright and new in this dark, old castle.

Here she was presently joined by a tall, spare, respectable-looking old woman in a black linsey dress, white apron and neck-slaw, and high crowned Scotch cap.

"How do you do, dame? You will show Lady Vincent to her apartments, and wait her orders."

"Eh, sirs! anither ane!" ejaculated the old woman, under her breath; then, turning to Claudia, with a curtsy, she said:

"I am ready to attend your leddyship."

Claudia arose and followed her through the vast hall and up the lofty staircase to another great square stone hall, whose four walls were regularly indented by lines of doors leading into the bed-chambers and dressing-rooms.

And as Claudia looked upon this array, her first thought was that a stranger might easily get confused among them and open the wrong door. And that it would be well to have them numbered, as at hotels, to prevent mistakes.

The old housekeeper opened one of the doors and admitted her mistress into a beautifully-furnished and decorated suite of apartments, which consisted of boudoir, bedroom and dressing-room opening into each other, so that, as Claudia entered the first, she had the vista of the three before her eyes. The floors were covered with Turkey carpets, so soft and deep in texture that they yielded like turf under the tread. And the heavy furniture was all of black walnut; and the draperies were all of golden-brown, satin-damask, and richly-embroidered lace. The effect of the whole was warm, rich, glowing and, above all, extremely comfortable.

Claudia looked around herself with approbation; her spirits rose; she felt reconciled to the rugged, old fortress that contained such splendours within its walls; for who would care how rough the casket so that the jewels it held were of the finest water? Her plans "soared up again like fire!"

She passed through the whole suite of rooms to the dressing-room, which was the last in succession, and seated herself in an easy chair beside a bright coal-fire.

"The dinner will be served in an hour, my leddy. Will I bring your leddyship a cup of tea before you begin to dress?" inquired the housekeeper.

"If you please, you may send it to me by one of my own women. You are too aged to walk up and down stairs," replied Claudia, kindly.

"Hech sirs! I'm e'en ready to laud me ain wi' any lassie i' the house," said the dame, nodding her tall, flapping white cap.

"Will you tell me your name, that I may know in future what to call you?" Claudia asked.

"It's e'en just Mistress Murdeck, at your laddy-ship's bidding. And noo I'll gae bring the tea."

"Send my servant Katy to me at the same time," said Lady Vincent, who, when she was left alone, turned again to view the magnificence that surrounded her.

"If ever I spend another autumn on this bleak coast, I shall take care to fill the castle halls and chambers with gay company," she said to herself.

The housekeeper entered with an elegant little tea-service of gold plate, and set it on a table of mosaic work, by Claudia's side.

While she was drinking her tea, Katy entered, smiling with both her eyes and all her teeth.

"Well, my ladyship, ma'am, this looks like life at last; don't it though?"

"I think so, Katy," said her mistress, sipping her aromatic "oolong."

"I like Scraggy better nor I thought I would."

"You like what?"

"This big gaol of a house—Scraggy something or other they call it."

"Castle Cragg."

"Yes, that's it! plague take the outlandish names, I say!"

"Now, Katy, unpack my maize-coloured moire-antique! I must dress for dinner."

Of course Claudia expected to meet no one at dinner except the disagreeable companion of her journey; but Claudia would have made an elaborate evening toilet, had there been no one but herself to admire it.

So she arrayed herself with very great splendour, and went down-stairs.

In the lower hall she found the porter and several footmen.

"Show me into the drawing-room," she said to the former.

Old Cutlibert bowed and walked before her, and threw open a pair of folding-doors leading into the grand saloon of the castle. And Claudia entered.

CHAPTER LXXXIII.

FAUSTINA.

And she was beautiful, they said;
I saw that she was more—
One of those women women dread,
Men fatally adore.

anon.

It was a saloon of magnificent proportions and splendid decorations. And Claudia was sailing across it with a majestic gait, in the full consciousness of being the Viscountess Vincent and Lady of the Castle, when suddenly her eyes fell upon an object that arrested her footsteps, while she gazed in utter amazement.

One of the most transcendently beautiful women that she had ever beheld, lay reclining in the most graceful and alluring attitude upon a low divan. Her luxuriant form, arrayed in rich, soft, white moire-antique and lace, was thrown into harmonious relief by the crimson velvet cover of the divan. She was asleep, or perhaps, affecting to be so. One fine, round, brown arm, with its elbow deep in the downy pillow, rose from its falling sleeve of silk and lace, with its jewelled hand, buried in masses of glittering, purplish black ringlets, supported a head that Rubens would have loved to paint. Those rich ringlets half-veiled the rounded arm and full curved neck and bosom that were otherwise too exposed. The features were formed in the most perfect mould of Oriental beauty; the forehead was broad and low, the nose fine and straight, the lips plump and full, and the chin small and rounded. The eyebrows were black, arched and tapering at the points, the eyelashes were black, long and drooping over half-closed, almond-shaped, dark eyes that seemed floating in liquid fire. The complexion was of the richest brown, ripening into the most brilliant crimson in the oval cheeks, and dewy lips that, falling half-open, revealed the little glistening white teeth within. While one jewelled hand supported the beautiful head, the other drooped over her reclining form, holding negligently, almost unconsciously, between thumb and finger, an odorous tea-rose.

Claudia herself was a brilliant brunette, but here was another brunette, who eclipsed her in her own splendid style of beauty as an astral lamp outshines a candle. Cleopatra, Thais, Aspasia, or any other world-renowned siren, who had governed kingdoms, through kings' passions, might have been just such a woman as this sleeping Venus.

Doubting really whether she slept or not, Claudia approached and looked over her; and the longer she looked, the more she wondered at, admired, and instinctively hated this woman.

Who was she? What was she? How came she there?

So absorbed was Claudia in these questions, while gazing at the beautiful and unconscious subject of

them, that she did not perceive the approach of Lord Vincent until he actually stood at her side.

Then she looked up at him inquiringly, and pointed at the sleeping beauty.

But instead of replying to her, he bent over the sleeper, and whispered:

"Faustina!"

Now, whether she were really sleeping or shamming, the awakening, real or pretended, was beautiful. The drooping, black-fringed eyelids slowly lifted themselves from the eyes—two large black orbs of soft fire; and the plump, crimson lips opened, and dropped two liquid notes of perfect music—the syllables of his baptismal name:

"Malcolm!"

"Faustina, you are dreaming: awaken! remember where you are," he said, in a low voice.

She slowly raised herself to a sitting posture, and looked around; but every movement of hers was perfect grace.

"Lady Vincent, this is Mrs. Dugald," said the viscount.

Claudia drew back a step, and bent her head with an air of the most freezing hauteur.

Mrs. Dugald also bent hers, but immediately threw it up and shook it back with a smile.

So graceful was this motion that it can be compared to nothing but the bend and rebound of a lily.

But when Claudia looked up she detected a strange glance of intelligence between her two companions. The beauty's eyes flashed from their sheath of softness, and gleamed forth upon the man—two living stiletos pointed with death.

His look expressed annoyance and fear.

He turned away, and touched the bell.

"Let dinner be served immediately," he said to the servant who answered the summons.

Dinner is served, my lord, answered the man, pushing aside the sliding-doors opening into the dining-room.

Lord Vincent waved his hand to Lady Vincent to precede them, and then gave his arm to Mrs. Dugald to follow her.

But when they reached the dining-room, Mrs. Dugald left his arm, advanced to the head of the table, and stood with her hand upon the back of the chair, and her gaze upon the face of the viscount.

"No: Lady Vincent will take the head of the table," said his lordship, giving his hand to Claudia, and installing her.

"As you will; but 'where the McDonald sits, there is the head of the table,'" said Mrs. Dugald, quoting the haughty words of the Lord of the Isles, as she gave way, and subsided into a side seat.

Lord Vincent, with a lowering brow, sat down.

Old Cutlibert, who sometimes officiated as butler, placed himself behind his lord's chair, and two footmen waited on the table.

The dinner was splendid in its service, and luxurious in its viands; but most uncomfortable in its company; and it suggested the Scripture proverb, "Better is a dinner of herbs where love is, than a stalled ox and hatred therewith."

Claudia, for one, was glad when it was over, and they were permitted to return to the saloon where coffee awaited them.

"Mrs. Dugald will you give me some music?" said Lord Vincent, in the course of the evening.

The beauty arose, and floated away, in her soft, swimming gait, towards the piano.

Lord Vincent went after her, and opened the instrument; and when she sat down he stood behind her chair to turn over the music.

She played a brilliant prelude, and commenced singing.

Claudia, who, at the proposition that Mrs. Dugald should give Lord Vincent "some music," had shrugged her shoulders and turned her back, was now startled. She turned around—listened. Claudia was a most fastidious connoisseur of music, and she recognized in this performer an *artiste* of the highest order. Claudia had heard such music as this only from the best opera singers—certainly from no unprofessional performer.

After executing a few brilliant pieces, the beautiful musician arose with a weary air, and saying that she was tired, curtsied, smiled, and withdrew from the room.

Lord Vincent walked slowly up and down the floor.

"Who is Mrs. Dugald?" inquired Claudia, coldly.

"Mrs. Dugald is—Mrs. Dugald," replied his lordship, affecting a light tone.

"That is no answer, my lord."

"Well, my lady, she is a relation of mine. Will that do for an answer?"

"What sort of relation?"

"A very near one."

"How near?"

"She is my—sister!" smiled Lord Vincent.

"Your sister? I know that you have only two

sisters, and they are styled 'ladies'—Lady Eda and Lady Clementina Dugald. This is a 'Mrs.' She cannot be your sister, and not even your sister-in-law, since you have no brother."

The viscount coolly lighted his cigar, and walked out of the room.

Claudia remained sitting where he had left her, deeply perplexed in mind. Then, feeling too restless to sit still, she arose, and began to walk about the room and examine its objects of interest—its pictures, statues, vases, &c.

She then went to the windows; the shutters were closed, the blinds down, and the curtains drawn, so that she could not look out into the night; but she could hear the thunder of the sea, as it broke upon the rock on which the castle was founded.

Tired of that, she went to the music-stand, near the piano, and began to turn over the music-books.

She picked up the one from which Mrs. Dugald had been singing. In turning it over, her eyes fell upon "the picture of a full-length female form, engraved upon the cover. She looked at it more closely. It was the portrait of the woman who had been introduced to her as Mrs. Dugald. But it bore the name,

"La Faustina as Norma."

(To be continued.)

OLD FATHER CHRISTMAS.

OLD FATHER Christmas! see here he comes!

With his puddings so nice, filled with currants and plums,

With his good old roast beef, and his turkeys so fine,
With dishes the rarest, and lots of choice wine,
He's a fine good old fellow, so jovial is he,
Then we'll fill him a bumper, wherever we be.

Old Father Christmas! the young and the old
Now meet with bright faces, though winter is cold;
The dance and the song, and the holly boughs green,
And the children in frolic and fun may be seen,
Then we'll sing loud his praises, so jovial is he,
And fill him a bumper, wherever we be.

MRS. C. A. DOUBBLE.

SIBYL'S CLIFF.

CHAPTER VII.

HIRAM THE GIPSY.

WHEN Sir Rashleigh left the scene where the coroner's inquest was being held, he did not return direct to Oakland Manor, but rode on to the village inn of Claremont, where he dismounted, and made his way to a sitting-room, the windows of which looked out on the main street. Here he sat for two hours, holding a recent London newspaper before him, and apparently engaged in the earnest perusal of its contents; but it is doubtful if a single line of the journal impressed itself upon his mind. At the expiration of that time, a solemn procession appeared upon the street, moving in the direction of the village church. A plain hearse, containing the coffin which enclosed the remains of the stranger found upon the beach, was followed by a train of fishermen and villagers. Sir Rashleigh left the house and joined it. The followers of the hearse stepped back, and made room for the young baronet at their head. Whatever were his feelings at occupying this position they were hid within his own bosom. He moved on with a firm step, never faltering, never moving his eyes from the black velvet pall that hung in stilted folds from the coffin.

On reaching the churchyard, the body was lifted from the hearse, and borne by six men into the churchyard. At the entrance it was met by the clergyman, who commenced reading the solemn burial-service of the Church of England. The grave had been dug in the north-easterly corner of the cemetery, far from the resting-place of the house of Franklin, whose carved mural tablet was one of the chief ornaments of the ancient Gothic church where they worshipped in life. To this last resting-place the mortal remains of the heir of Oakland were committed. Standing uncovered by the grave, Sir Rashleigh remained till the last shovelful of earth had been thrown in, and the men were engaged in smoothing the mound with their implements. Then, after exchanging a few courteous words with the officiating clergyman, he left the churchyard, regained the inn, and calling for his horse, resumed his ride. No act in the life of Sir Rashleigh had been calculated to give him greater popularity among the lower classes than the respect paid by him to the remains of this unfortunate stranger! A stranger! Alas! they did not guess his secret.

Once out of sight of the villagers, Sir Rashleigh pursued his course at the headlong speed which had marked the commencement of his day's ride. There is always a sympathy between a generous horse and his habitual rider; the former instinctively suiting

his pace to the mood of the latter. It seemed as if Black Rover understood the feverish storm that raged in the bosom of his master, and impelled him to speed from place to place as if driven before the flaming sword of the avenging angel. Fierce and tireless, he dashed up rocky ascents, he plunged into the shadowy hollows, he swept across level plains, without any signs of weariness. Sir Rashleigh had left the highway, and struck through an opening in the hedge that led into a woodland path. He was roused into a consciousness of what was passing around him, by the sudden slackening of his horse's speed, followed by a dead halt, and looking before him, saw that his further progress in the direction he had been pursuing was impeded by a high-barred gate, against which a man dressed in sordid attire, his face concealed by a slouched hat, was carelessly lounging.

"Just be good enough to open the gate for me, my friend," said Sir Rashleigh.

"Not so fast, sir," replied the man, lifting the brim of his hat so as to expose his wild, sunburnt face, round which his hair fell in jetty elf-locks. "You were the very man I was thinking of and wishing to see. Talk of his Satanic Majesty—you know the saying."

"Hiram, the gipsy!" said Sir Rashleigh.

"The very same, at your service," replied the man, with a salutation so exaggerated as to appear contemptuous.

"And so you were wishing to see me?" said Sir Rashleigh, coolly.

"Yes, sir. I was thinking of calling on you, but my wardrobe is so very dilapidated, that I hesitated to present myself at Oakland Manor-house. Something of my former pride is left me; and there are times when I cannot forget that I was once a gentleman. But get off your horse and tie him to the gate. There is an oppressive feeling of inequality that comes over me when I see you sitting on a fine horse, such as I once rode, while I'm standing on foot with my toes out of my shoes."

"I have no time to talk with you, Hiram," said Sir Rashleigh. "Some other time I'll hear what you have to say."

"There is no time like the present, Sir Rashleigh, and I can't keep in what I have to say to you. It's such a burden to me that I must unburden myself to somebody; and I tell you, Sir Rashleigh, that it is far better for you to hear me, than to force me to talk about what I have on my mind to others."

There was something sinister in the man's expression and tone, which strangely impressed Sir Rashleigh as with a presage of evil. He hesitated a moment, and then dismounting, tied his horse to the gate.

"We must make sure, Sir Reginald," said the gipsy, "that there are no listeners. So, by your leave, I'll take you to a safer place of conference than this is."

He led the way through an opening in the hedge into a path in the oak forest, which he followed for a short distance, and then turned into a broad open space, in the centre of which was a low flat rock. Here he seated himself, Sir Rashleigh following his example.

"I have been purposing to call upon you for some days," said the man; "but, as I told you, my clothes were too shabby; last night, however, my hesitation vanished, and I made up my mind, that if chance didn't throw you in my way, I would seek you out, come what might."

"And your object?"

"Oh, the old errand, money," said the gipsy.

"I think I told you that the money I gave you some months since was the very last I would bestow on you," said Sir Rashleigh.

"I recollect it distinctly."

"And I think you know enough of my character, to know that indecision is not one of its weaknesses."

"I am aware of that, too, Sir Rashleigh."

"And yet you proposed attempting to extort more money from me?"

"Only five pounds."

"And supposing you had seen me, and I had refused you, as I certainly should have done?"

"Why, then, I should have threatened to acquaint your uncle with some of your old pranks; have shown him what a wild life you led, and what wild company you kept in secret, while your sanctimonious character was imposing on him and all the world."

"Now mark what would have followed," replied Sir Rashleigh. "Those things were occurrences of the past. I have had my follies and I have abjured them. I have so firmly established my character that I enjoy universal confidence. I know my uncle so well now, that I know he would rather be pleased than angered if he found out that I had not always been the saint I professed; that I had not always mastered the exuberant vitality of youth. Once I dreaded an *exposé*—I have long since ceased to do so—long since determined that you, and such as you, should levy no more black mail on me."

"You have spoken frankly, and I believe truthfully, Sir Rashleigh. I myself thought it more than likely that I should not get the five pounds. To tell the truth, I gave up all thoughts of calling on you till last night, when I resumed my project."

"You were determined to-day, then, to ask me for five pounds?"

"No, Sir Rashleigh, as time passed on, and I turned the matter over in my mind, I determined to ask you for five hundred pounds."

"Five hundred pounds! Are you mad, Hiram?"

"Never was more rational, Sir Rashleigh. You have spared me the trouble of seeking you, and now I ask for five hundred pounds sterling. If you haven't that amount about you, you can write your cheque for it—or your note would be good for the amount. I should prefer the money, however, for I hate trouble."

"Why don't you ask me for five thousand pounds?" asked Sir Rashleigh with a sneer.

"I had thought of it," replied the gipsy, with composure. "But I reflected that five hundred pounds would answer my present purposes. When that was exhausted, I could come to you again."

"That was your game, fellow, eh?"

"Yes, that was my game, I have shown you my hand," said Hiram, calmly.

"Do you wish to see my hand?" said Sir Rashleigh.

"I have no objection," replied the gipsy indifferently.

"Then I will meet you on the square. In the first place, I will give you neither five hundred pounds, nor five pounds, nor five shillings, nor five pence. In the second place, there are laws against vagrants and gipsies, and, if you dare to annoy me now or hereafter, my uncle, who is in the commission of the peace, shall put them in force against you and your gang, and you will have either the alternative of going to the gaol or treadmill, or leaving this part of the country, and ridding me of your accursed presence for ever."

"I will answer your threats and assertions *seriatim*—you see I haven't quite forgotten my Latin," replied the gipsy, who had listened indifferently to Sir Rashleigh's speech. "In the first place, you will give me the five hundred pounds before you leave this spot. If you do so, of course it will show that you abandon your threats of summary vengeance. But, in any event, you will not invoke the law against me, for you dare not arouse the wild vengeance of the gipsy. Once more, will you give me five hundred pounds?"

"No!"

"If that is your last word, I have nothing more to say. What I have to say will be communicated to the nearest magistrate."

He looked steadily in the face of Sir Rashleigh as he spoke. In spite of the latter's almost matchless self-control, he could not suppress a convulsive twitching of the muscles of his mouth, a sudden, sharp, agonised contraction of his brow.

"I should like to see you before a magistrate!" he muttered.

"You would not like to be before a magistrate," replied the gipsy, "if you knew my purpose was to denounce you as a murderer!"

"Villain!" cried Sir Rashleigh, springing to his feet.

"Take the word back to yourself!" retorted the gipsy, fiercely. "Spendthrift, gambler, hard-drinker, vagabond, I may be; but my hand was never stained with blood."

Sir Rashleigh sank back on the rock, his lips white with terror, his hand clutching at his heart to check its convulsive beatings, his whole frame quivering with uncontrollable emotion.

The gipsy watched the effect of his words with a grim smile of satisfaction.

"Is this your boasted firmness, Sir Rashleigh?"

Which of us would make the better figure before a magistrate now, think you—the ragged vagrant, or the finely-dressed gentleman?"

"Forbear—fear to torture me!" gasped Sir Rashleigh.

"Torture! is there torture in a word? It strikes me that there is more torture in a crowded courtroom, in the angry hootings of a multitude, in the haunted solitude of a cell, in the grim publicity of the gallows."

"Spare me, spare me! I will give you the five hundred pounds."

"I will not touch a penny of it, sir, till you have heard how far I am entitled to it. Last night—"

Sir Rashleigh pressed his hands to his eyes, as if to shut out some terrible vision, and listened breathlessly to every syllable that fell from the lips of the gipsy.

"Last night," pursued the gipsy, "I found myself in the neighbourhood of Merlin's Cliff. I was far from the camp, exhausted by a long tramp, and had sought shelter from the storm, and a resting-place for

the night, in a hollow of a rock beside the path. A man appeared—another sprang upon him from the bushes. My first impulse was to interfere; but when the moon shone out, when I recognized the voices and the faces of both, the fiend whispered to me to keep still and bide the issue, that fate was committing to my charge a secret that was worth more gold to me than I had ever thought to be within my grasp."

"You say you recognized both of these men?" said Sir Rashleigh, dropping his hands, and looking up. His iron will had at length over-mastered the terrors of his guilty conscience.

"Both of them," replied the gipsy. "You, of course—the other whom I had met in a remote part of the country, living under the name of Arthur Morton. I knew him, for I had seen him years before at the manor-house, to be also the heir of Oakland. Besides, the words that passed between you identified him. From the moment of your meeting to that in which your guilt was consummated, I was the witness of the struggle. Is my evidence worth five hundred pounds?"

"You shall have the five hundred pounds," said Sir Rashleigh. "I have the money about me, and I will pay it into your hands here on the spot. But this payment, let me tell you, will utterly exhaust my present available means. You must remember that my fortune is still only in prospective. Sir George Franklin clings to life with a singular tenacity."

"Cannot your science, Sir Rashleigh, suggest some safe means of terminating his troublesome existence?"

Sir Rashleigh trembled.

"One sin already weighs upon my soul," he answered, with a shudder. "Do you think I could add to the burden?"

"I beg your pardon, Sir Rashleigh," said the gipsy; "but I thought that a second murder was nothing, after you had got your hand in—that is, I have always heard so."

Sir Rashleigh made no reply to this, but he took out his pocket-book, and counting out five one-hundred pound notes, handed them to the gipsy, who, with a cool "thank ye," carelessly slipped them into a pocket of a ragged vest.

"And now, Sir Rashleigh," said Hiram, "if I can serve you in anything, you have only to send for me; the tribe will camp here for some months. I say you may send for me, but not immediately—I'm going to take a furlough for a few days?"

"Where are you going?"

"To Paris, delightful Paris! dear in more senses than one. It is strange, but though I have often persuaded myself that I had cut civilization entirely; yet, no sooner do I feel money jingling in my pocket, than my hankering after the old life resumes its sway. It's such a pleasant transition from the wood to the city—from the fogs of England to the skies of sunny France. And then the drives in the Bois de Boulogne, the suppers, and *rouge-et-noir* in the Palais Royale! What a pity they're so expensive! Now, however, thanks to your generosity, my kind friend, I can indulge in them once again. So adieu and *au revoir*—you see my French comes back with the prospect of revisiting the country where it grows."

Sir Rashleigh rose and forced his proud spirit to condescend to offer his hand to the vagabond who possessed his terrible secret. But the latter declined the courtesy.

"Excuse me," said he, "my hand is dirty, but it has not the stain that rests on yours. A little water will cleanse mine—but yours—"

He paused, for the look of imploring agony that Sir Rashleigh bent upon him moved even his pity. And so the baronet and the gipsy parted; the latter to rejoin his tribe, and make arrangements for his departure the former to mount his horse, and endeavour to compose himself, as he rode back to Oakland Manor house.

CHAPTER VIII

A TRUE NAPOLEONIST. PARIS UNDERGROUND.

SIR RASHLEIGH found that the Rue des Tenebres was a narrow, dark and dirty street, and the artist's room was up six flights of stairs—or rather seven, for the first story of a French house corresponds to our second. He tapped at the door, and received a cheerful "Come in!" in reply. He entered, and was confronted by a little, rotund, rosy-faced Frenchman—the picture of health and good-humour, attired in a dressing-gown originally constructed for a gentleman of lofty stature, and consequently descending to the very heels of its present owner. This garment resembled Jacob's coat of many colours, in the patches of rainbow tints that covered its front. Monsieur Napoleon Bruno's face, also, looked like a palette after a hard day's work, for he was in the habit of manipulating the pigments on his canvas, and of tapping his forehead or tweaking his nose in quest of ideas, so that, his face presented a sort of chaotic reflection of the work he happened to have on hand. On this morn-

ing, there were several blotches of vermilion over his right eyebrow, and a spot of emerald green on either cheek, while the end of his nose was ornamented with ultramarine blue. He was balancing a huge palette on his left hand, and held a sheaf of brushes in his right.

"Good morning, monsieur," was the salutation of this highly coloured votary of the fine arts; "a fine day—Vive Napoleon!"

"Having had the honour of purchasing one of your productions, Monsieur Bruno," said Sir Rashleigh, "I could not resist the temptation of calling to pay my respects to the artist."

"Monsieur, you honour me—Vive Napoleon! Pray be seated."

He removed an ancient shield, and a broken-nosed plaster-head from an arm-chair, and, dusting it with the flap of his dressing-gown, installed Sir Rashleigh in his seat.

The visitor glanced around him. There was the usual litter of an artist's room—paints, canvases, casts, unfinished pictures, costumes, bottles and pigs of oil, tubes, &c., &c. But above all, the walls were peopled with Napoleons. There were Napoleons at Austerlitz; Napoleons at the Pyramids; Napoleons in Moscow; Napoleons in coronation robes; Napoleons at Fontainebleau; Napoleons at Elba; Napoleons everywhere, except at Waterloo and St. Helena. Napoleon I.—there was no Napoleon III. then—was evidently the especial idol of this little obscure painter, and he had, as evidently, devoted the best years of his life to the reproduction of the features of his beloved emperor. Such was his assiduity, that this man alone would have overstocked the market. The market was already glutted by other pencils, and he had an enormous quantity on his hands.

"You were saying, monsieur," said the artist, "that you had purchased one of my productions. Was it a Napoleon?"

"No, monsieur—it was a picture of wine drinkers in a cellar."

"Ah, yes, I remember. (Vive Napoleon!) I left it with Blancard. Might I inquire what he asked for it?"

"One hundred francs."

"Name of Napoleon! the brigand told me that it was worth but eighty, and that is all he will account to me for. And he didn't show you my 'Napoleon in 1815'?"

"No, monsieur."

"The picture-dealers are in a league to ruin me. I was but a child in 1815—but I had already evinced a talent for drawing. One day, I was standing looking through the railing of the Tuileries, when the emperor was walking alone, with his hands behind him—so (and the artist imitated the historical attitude of his idol). This was on the eve of Waterloo. I say he was alone. The scoundrels that he had decorated with epaulettes and stars, and ribbons, and crosses, had deserted him—only the people remained true to him. I had a pencil and a bit of paper with me, and I dared, with a trembling, childish hand, to delineate the outlines of that august face. Monsieur, I tell you for a truth, that his eagle eye detected me in the act. How my heart beat! He approached the railing. 'What are you doing there?' he said. 'Behold, sire!' I replied, trembling, and I passed the paper between the bars. He looked at it, and smiled. '*Pas mal, mon enfant*,' (not so bad, my child,) they were his very words. 'Persevere. And if you wish to correct your sketch, I will give you my picture to help your memory.' He put his hand in his pocket, took out a gold napoleon, and handed it to me. Monsieur, I have been very poor since then. I have known what it was to want bread—yes, name of Napoleon! to ask charity—but I have never parted with that souvenir—the gift to a poor boy, by the greatest hand that ever swayed the sceptre of the world. Look here, monsieur."

He opened a not very immaculate inner garment, and displayed, hanging round his neck by a faded black ribbon, the gold piece whose history he had related.

"You see now," he added with a smile, "why my walls are crowded with Napoleons."

"And now, Monsieur Bruno," said Sir Rashleigh, "will you permit me to refer to your picture of the wine-bibbers? Is not that figure beneath the gas-jet a portrait from life?"

"I generally make my studies from life," replied the artist, evasively. "A striking face and figure make an impression on my memory, and when I have occasion for such I recall them, without always remembering where I met the original. One meets all sorts of faces and figures in Paris."

"But, Mr. Bruno, this figure seemed to me not to have been painted from memory. It seemed as if every line had been drawn, and every tint laid on in the presence of an original."

"Did monsieur think he had known the original?" asked the painter, eyeing Sir Rashleigh, sharply.

Frankly—yes. I thought it resembled a certain countryman of mine, known in Paris as the Chevalier St. George."

"A man very careless in his habits—forgetful of paying his debts?" asked the painter.

"Yes."

"And monsieur is perhaps desirous of recovering a debt?—labour lost."

"By no means; I wish to see the person I refer to, to pay him a debt."

"Your word of honour?" asked the artist, hesitatingly.

"On my word of honour, I do."

"Assure me, by the sacred name of Napoleon, that you do not wish to do him an injury."

"I assure you, by the name of your patron saint, monsieur, that I wish to confer a benefit on him."

"And you wish urgently to see him?"

"I wish urgently to see him—it is a case of the first necessity."

"If that be the case, monsieur," said the artist, "I think I can procure you an interview. But I am under the greatest obligations to this unfortunate chevalier—he bought a Napoleon of me. I partly cancelled the obligation by lending him a portion of the money when he fell into difficulties—but I would tear my heart out rather than betray him to the hounds that are tracking him. Peste! I know what the minions of the law are too well, myself. Under the Bourbons, I was pursued for treason—I sold the Napoleons when the sacred name and face were proscribed—and I was in hiding for months in Paris, until the pursuit was dropped; living among the strangest people—brigands, assassins—but they revered the name of the emperor, they never betrayed one who sought their hospitality. This is a strange world, monsieur. Sometimes gratitude carries me back to old haunts. I think I know where the chevalier may be found to-night. But if you go with me, you must swear beforehand, never to reveal any of the secrets you may chance to discover."

"I will take any obligation you choose to impose. My name and rank are a guarantee that I am no spy."

Sir Rashleigh here handed the artist his card. He read it, smiled, and carefully put it in his pocket.

During the preceding conversation, the artist, perhaps from habit, had been sketching the features of his visitor, on a bit of canvas that was tacked to his easel, and had produced a very striking likeness.

"I shall keep this," he said, pointing to it, "as a souvenir of a generous patron. They are not too plenty, I assure you. Well, monsieur," he added, "if you will come here at eight o'clock, I shall be ready with the necessary disguises."

"Disguises!"

"Certainly—you will not go where I shall take you to-night dressed as a gentleman. It would be as much as your life was worth."

"Must I be armed?"

"It would be as well to put a pistol in your pocket as a last resort."

"Very well, then, I will be here at eight o'clock."

Taking leave of the painter, Sir Rashleigh returned to his hotel, where he dined, and passed the time as well as he could until the hour of the rendezvous arrived. He then made his way to the Rue des Tenebres, where he found his artistic acquaintance impatiently awaiting him. The painter had already metamorphosed himself by donning a greasy blue cloth cap, with a battered visor; a blouse, so stained that its original colour was purely conjectural, and a pair of rough, hob-nailed shoes. A similar dress had been prepared for Sir Rashleigh, and stepping behind a screen, he changed his toilet with marvellous celerity.

"Bon!" cried the painter, when Sir Rashleigh emerged into the studio. "You look like one of the people, you do, by the sacred name of Napoleon!"

All being ready, they descended to the street. Upon walking some distance, Bruno stopped and spoke a few words to the driver of a hackney-coach, into which they stepped, and were driven rapidly over the rough pavements for about half-an-hour. Here the driver pulled up his horses, Bruno and his companion alighted, and the former handed his fare to hackman, who drove back to his stand.

They were now in an obscure and badly-lighted quarter of the city. No brilliant gas-jets, installed at brief intervals, imitated the light of day, but here and there a smoky oil-lamp was burning dimly in a lantern, swung on cord, suspended across the street.

"Does your heart fail you?" asked Sir Rashleigh's guide. "We are now in places where a man's throat is often cut for the sake of a few francs."

"Put your hand on my wrist, Mr. Bruno, and see if my pulse beats regularly," was Sir Rashleigh's reply.

The painter did as he was bid, and exclaimed: "Sacred name of Napoleon! It is as regular as clock-work. You might have served in the grand army. This way, then."

He suddenly turned to the right, and descended a long and narrow flight of stone steps leading to a low door. At this he tapped three times.

"Who goes there?" cried a hoarse voice.

"Friends," was the reply.

"Advance, one friend, and give the countersign," was the military rejoinder.

Bruno stepped forward, and whispered the word to the janitor.

The door was then cautiously opened, and the visitors were allowed to enter. The porter scrutinized Sir Rashleigh sharply as he advanced, but the examination was apparently satisfactory, for he growled out, "Pass, friends," in as amicable a tone as his husky voice permitted him to assume.

No wonder the painter sometimes revisited his old haunts, for the scene that the adventurers now beheld was eminently picturesque—one that would have delighted the wild nature of Salvator Rosa. The room was well lit up by candles set in sconces fastened to the rough, slimy and green stone-walls. In a huge grate burned a fire of coal that failed to dispel the dampness of the vault, though it emitted a powerful heat. Tables of various dimensions were set out all over the floor, around which were gathered ruffianly groups of men, mixed with boys and women, all intent on eating or carousing.

Here a savage-bearded fellow, half-famished, was cutting off huge slices of bread from a big loaf, with a knife that might have been used for more terrible work. There a girl, once beautiful, was fast obliterating, by deep potations, every semblance of softness and intelligence from her besotted countenance. Boys of tender age, but with features as hard and stern as men of fifty, candidates for the gallies and the guillotine, were drinking "blue ruin" in the company of remorseless men. It was the undisguised saturnalia of crime.

Here Satan showed his cloven foot,
And hid his titiled name.

One brawny ruffian, saturated with brandy, was sprawling on a bench, with his back against the wall, recounting the details of a murder in which he had participated, pausing to add, by the aid of a short pipe, to the clouds of tobacco-smoke which formed a dense canopy overhead. At a rude counter, a muscular, fiery-faced woman, dressed in a blazing red silk, with a flaming turban, gold ear-drops, and a mass of rings upon her hard, short fingers, commanded a squad of waiters, and dispensed the burning liquids which formed her stock in trade. Her vigilant eye noticed the new-comers, and she called out:

"Halloo, there! Little Napoleon. Come hither, my lad. It's a long time since my eyes have beheld you, my pearl of painters. Tip up your flipper, my pal!" (we are obliged to render French *argot* by English slang.)

The painter extended his hand, and received a vice-like grip from the Hebe of the taproom. Her sharp eyes now detected the presence of Sir Rashleigh, who kept himself a little in the back-ground.

"So you've brought a pal with you, eh?" she said. "If he's one of the sort as *whiddles and peaches* (blabs and betrays), 'he's in the wrong box, my little spoiler of canvases."

"By the memory of Napoleon the Great, Madame Poisson," said the painter, "I swear to you he is as trustworthy as myself."

"All right," said the lady. "Let me give the gentleman the grip of welcome."

Sir Rashleigh extended his hand, and the presiding genius of the cellar grasped it with great cordiality.

"That's the hand of an aristo, however, she said.

"An aristo!" cried a bull-necked fellow in a blue blouse, with a scarlet neck-tie. "What business has an aristocrat here? Death to aristocrats."

Three or four other ruffians caught up the cry, and sprang to their feet.

"Order there, order!" cried Madame Poisson. "Have you no respect for the presence of a lady?"

"Lady or no lady," said the fellow with the scarlet neck-tie, "I demand this—a gentleman (he sneeringly emphasized the title) to treat the entire company."

"Bravo, bravo!" cried the assembled ruffians.

"You will have to comply with the demand," whispered Bruno in Sir Rashleigh's ear.

"Do you hear?" roared the bully of the taproom, his face reddening with passion.

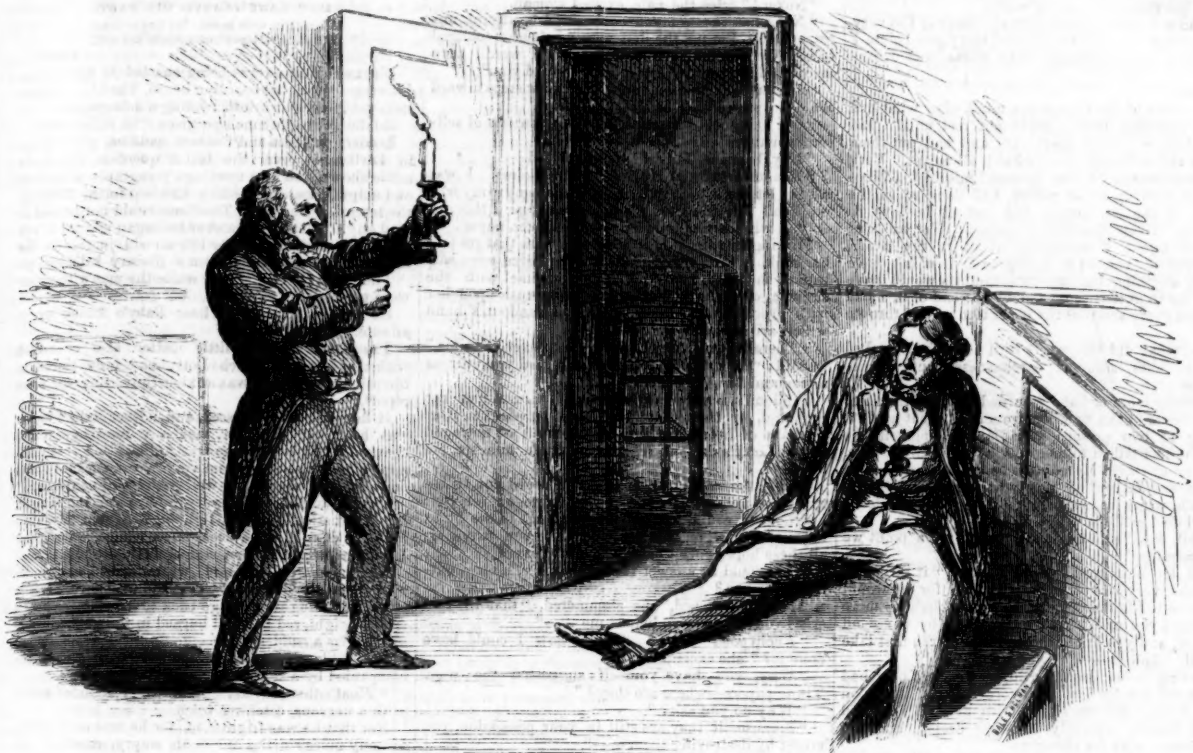
"What if I decline?" asked Sir Rashleigh, with perfect coolness.

"Then you will have to do with me," replied the bully.

"Hurrah for the Red Cravat!" cried one of that gentleman's backers and cronies.

But we must reserve the result of this hostile demonstration for another chapter.

(To be continued)



[MR. PLUNKETT DISCOVERS A SPY.]

MAN AND HIS IDOL.

CHAPTER LXXVIII
CAUGHT IN THE SNARE.

What fire is in my ears? Can this be true?

Shakespeare.

Did the girl Lotty suspect nothing from the craftily worded epistle which Flora Angerstein had dictated to her lover, and which he had so reluctantly addressed to her? Was not her mind awakened to any fear of the serpent lurking under those flowers of speech which were so grateful to her famished heart?

It might have been so. But when did ever passion reason coolly, or fly from any danger to which its indulgence might expose it? As she bent over those dangerous lines with a flaming eye, and a cheek scarlet with excitement and delight, she only thought of the joy of meeting Archy, of the possibility of a reconciliation, of a possible future of the knew not what amount of happiness. A little reflection would have shown her how improbable it was that such a man would have written such a letter without some special object; but she did not care to reflect. It was pleasanter to look on the bright side. Besides, there are moments in which we voluntarily suffer ourselves to be deluded—rather prefer it than otherwise—and such a moment was this to Lotty.

Without permitting a second thought to interpose, she hastily put on her bonnet and shawl, and set off for Great Queen Street.

In answer to an inquiry, she learned that Sandoun was there, and might be found alone in the private drawing-room of the boarding-house.

Perhaps, in a moment of less excitement, Lotty would have noticed as a suspicious circumstance, that as she entered by one door a second, on the opposite side of the room, abruptly closed, and the long fringe of a woman's scarf almost caught in it as it did so.

Sandoun, who was apparently reading, threw down his book as Lotty entered, and advanced with extended hands.

"You are come?" he said. "It is very good of you."

"Not at all," she answered, in a flutter of delight. "I have been to blame, from first to last, Archy dear: mine was the first wrong word, and I ought to have been the first to come round. But you're so good, so generous. Oh, Archy, that letter—how could you bring yourself to write it?"

How indeed?

The young lord did not feel it necessary to explain

how it had been wrong from him; he preferred evading the question, and only said:

"It ought to have been written long ago, my girl, long ago. But I've had so much to think of—this confounded marriage among other things."

Lotty drew her breath quickly, as if to hear those words was like inhaling new life.

"Ah!" she cried, "I have been so unjust to you! I did half-believe that you loved this woman you were in such hot haste to marry. In my jealousy and despair, I fancied she had entangled you with her face, and her soft voice, and her winning ways, and that you'd thrown me off on the first pretence because you hadn't the pluck to tell me of it. I tortured myself with this, and I don't know what besides; but you'll forgive me?"

"Forgive you? Freely, freely!"

There was more excitement than heart about the man's manner. He was playing a part which he felt degraded him: as a man, and which he longed to bring to an end as speedily as might be.

Lotty did not know or suspect this.

She only knew that he was by her side once more; that they were friends; that the gloomy past was gone for ever—swallowed up in returning happiness.

There was a momentary pause; then Lotty drew nearer to the young lord as they sat upon the sofa, drawn close to the fire.

"And now Archy," cried Lotty, at length—tremulously anxious to make the revelation with which she was, so to speak, overcharged; "I must take you into my confidence. This is a busy night to me, and I'll tell you why. That quarrel and that parting between us put thoughts into my head, Archy, that I'm sure I never should have had but for that morning's work. It made me hard, and cruel, and vindictive, and I swore that I'd never let Blanche St. Omer have you. No, not if I shot her dead at the altar rails."

"You were, indeed, determined, Lotty!" cried his lordship, not altogether liking the expression of the fierce eyes that lighted up with a tigerish expression as she spoke—not, in fact, feeling altogether on the safe side in the treacherous double game he was playing.

"Yes," she said, "I didn't know that there was so much vindictiveness in me; I didn't, really. But, as I was going to say, when I'd come to that determination everything seemed to work round to help me to keep it. I met Daniel Kingston and his daughter by accident, and that led to my going down to Galescombe, partly to see what became of them, partly to spite the St. Omers. Here a strange thing happened to me."

Sandoun looked anxious. Any disclosure at that moment might be, at the very least, important.

"One morning while I was in the village, I for the first time met Lady Blanche. She was walking in the park, with her hands crossed over an open book. I knew her in a minute; I knew too, what that book and those crossed hands, and those downcast eyes meant. She was thinking deeply, and I persuaded myself that it was of you."

"You were wrong, Lotty; she never wasted a thought on me, except it was an ungracious one."

"No matter!" returned the girl. "I thought so, and my anger was roused, and I could have done her a mischief. I could have killed her as soon as look at her, and I told her so."

"The deuce you did!" cried his lordship.

"Yes; I didn't mince the matter. I hated her in my heart, and before I left her, I let her know it. Now, my way back, led me through a meadow, I don't know its name, but it was a quiet, lonely place, and with all that anger burning in my heart, and seeming as if it would drive me mad, I felt that I'd give the world if I could lie down in that quiet, green spot, and never wake again. In my passion and my misery, I threw myself down upon the long, wet grass, and lay there, shutting my eyes from the light that made me sick, grinding my teeth together like a wild beast, and clutching at the grass, that it was a pleasure to tear up by the long tufts and scatter all about me. I don't know how long I was there, it might have been an hour, or more perhaps, but at last I calmed down a bit, and the tears came into my eyes; and, though I was still very angry and bitter at my heart, they did me good. I was never much for crying, was I?"

"No," replied Archy, wondering what all this was leading to. "I never saw you shed a tear in my life."

"I'm not a crying sort," she resumed, "tears used to make me ill, but those didn't, they calmed me and quieted me, and I sat up and began to arrange my hair, for it was all over my face. Then, for the first time, I looked about me, and I saw that all over the grass where I sat, and away in a white line across the meadow, there were scattered little fragments of a torn paper, or letter as I supposed. It was nothing to me—nothing. At first I thought nothing of it, or if I did, it was only to conclude in my mind that some lover or some deluded girl, had thus scattered the evidences of their indiscretion to the winds. What first really struck me, was that the paper was old, very old and yellow, and when sitting there, I picked up a scrap and looked at it, my surprise was intense—for what reason do you think?"

"How should I know?" asked his lordship, inte-

rested, but evidently uneasy, as if, even while he listened, his thoughts were far away.

"Because that scrap had on it the name of the very man who had told me his doleful story just before I came down to the village. The name was Kingston."

"Indeed!"

"The effect of that upon my mind, after what had passed, was such that I could not rest until I had collected more of the fragments and had put them together and satisfied myself what it all meant. Very soon I was convinced that it meant mischief. Whoever had torn up those papers, had done so in the interest of the St. Omers and out of no love to Kingston. I saw that clearly enough. For an hour I should think, I scrambled about in the damp, cold meadow, excited to a degree I shouldn't have thought anything but my own troubles would have excited me to at that time, and by the end of it, I had recovered every scrap of the paper torn up and thrown away."

"And what did the papers turn out to be?" asked Sandoun, with assumed carelessness, but intense eagerness.

"Nothing more or less," returned Lotty, "than two certificates of births, or copies from registers it may be, relating to two persons, one Daniel Kingston, the man who had talked to me only a day or two before, the other of David Meredith, who, as I've since been told, is the father of the young man, Kingston Meredith, who's so sweet upon the earl's daughter—the earl do I call him? he's no earl!"

"Well, well," said Sandoun, "that's not a point we can determine."

"But for bless you," urged the girl, "it turns out that these very bits of paper that but for me would have gone to the four winds, prove that he's no more right than you or I. He's only a son by a second marriage, and you know the children of the first take the lead. And so—"

Speaking in her usually glib, easy style, Lotty had not noticed that her last few words seemed lost upon his lordship. He was sitting with averted head and knitted brows, evidently thinking deeply, and not over-pleased with his thoughts.

"Why, what's the matter?" cried the girl.

"Nothing!" he said, trying to compose himself, "nothing!"

He did not choose to say that in his heart of hearts he was cursing her for the meddling interference which was nearly losing him the money, on which he so counted, and begging the family from his alliance with which he had hoped so much. Still, his vexation was so great that he could hardly help showing it.

"And so," he said, after a pause, during which he had bit his lip nervously, "this is the clue to the mystery that has troubled the St. Omers so much?"

"Yes," answered Lotty, triumphantly, "but you don't seem pleased?"

"Pleased?" he cried, with a savage laugh.

"Why you should be, you must be, if you care anything for me, Archy. I know, for you told me so long ago, that your father is cruel and arbitrary, and that he had almost forced you into a marriage with Blanche. Well, then, I have come to your aid. I've produced the proofs that the earl is an impostor, and Blanche a beggar; and of course the duke will take good care that he doesn't compromise himself with that lot now. So you are free, you see—though it may cost you a little sacrifice in money."

Sandoun had stood it up to this point. Now he sprang up, and going to the fireplace, leant his arm on the mantel-piece, with an expression in his face anything but wholesome to look at.

"Oh, what's the matter? What have I done?" pleaded Lotty, anxiously. "Are you offended with me?"

"Offended!" he cried, impetuously, "no, my girl, the time's past when I could be offended—but I tell you what, without knowing it, you've done me the worst turn that ever a good friend did a poor devil. You've ruined me!"

In an instant she was at his side, with a terrified face.

"Archy!" she pleaded, what do you say? What is it you mean? Tell me, for Heaven's sake, how I have wronged you, and what reparation I can make?"

Then Sandoun, with an earnestness very foreign to him, said:

"Can you understand, Lotty, that the son of a beggar is a beggar? Can you understand that the duke coming into encumbered estates, and living a wild, free life, has left himself nothing but his title and the hope of marrying me to a fortune? Can you understand that, but for this discovery of yours, the claimants to the earldom of St. Omer might have beat their brains out against the gates of Redruth, before they could have established their rights, and that so, the earl's fortune would have been mine?"

"Yes," said Lotty, "yours—had you married Blanche."

"Which I should have done," he returned.

"Never!" cried the pale, excited woman.

"Nonsense, Lotty; your opposition is absurd, unreasonable. I'm not the first man who's been obliged to sacrifice himself for a position; but it would have made no difference in my feelings toward you."

She started from him, and taking a few steps toward the door, pressed her hands to her brow.

"Oh, fool, fool!" she cried, in the bitterness of self-condemnation.

"Nay, hear me, Lotty!" he interposed.

"'Tis useless," she replied, "quite useless. I was mad to let the letter blind me for a moment to my true position. I forgot what I am in your eyes. I thought only of what I can never be to you—never, never!"

Striving in vain to keep back the tears that rose in her choking throat, and reddened her fierce eyes, she walked hurriedly to and fro, overcome with the anguish of feelings which seemed to rush upon her with overwhelming force. It was Sandoun's hand which arrested her.

"There is one thing, Lotty, you can ever be to me," he said; "let it be my privilege to regard you ever as a true and loving friend!"

Sandoun's knowledge of human nature was not profound, or he would never have proposed to pour the balm of friendship into the wounds of outraged love. Lotty's instant resentment made him see his mistake.

"No," she said; "no, no! I had hoped you still—still cared for me. I thought you wrote out of your heart, as I could have written to you. I see I was mistaken. But, oh! Archy, why have you raised up all these hopes only to crush them for ever?"

What could he answer to the weeping, loving, outraged woman?

"I—I had hoped," he stammered, "that in this crisis you would have helped me—"

"I help you? How? Tell me how I could have done it?" she exclaimed.

"Why, you have yourself suggested the way. Those papers—where are they?"

"Why do you ask?"

"Because, if they are still in your possession, you might by destroying them—"

"I see it all!" she shrieked. "Yes, yes; I am decoyed here that I might be tempted into destroying those papers. I might give Blanche St. Omer a husband, and the Duke of Hereford and his worthy son a fortune. You knew of my power; you had learned the cards I held in my hands, and you thought my heart was weak enough to entrap me into such a folly. No, Archy, no; I am proof against your devices, I spurn your proffered friendship, and with God's help, I will live to hate you as fiercely as I have ever loved you!"

She strode toward the door, clutched at the handle, and would have left him, but the door was locked.

"What does this mean?" she demanded.

"Simply that you don't go yet," answered his lordship, with the utmost coolness.

"Do you mean to tell me that I am a prisoner here?" she asked.

"For a few hours—yes!" was his reply.

Turning upon the young lord a face deeply lined with rage, Lotty reflected for an instant. As she did so, the opposite door of the room opened, and Flora Angerstein entered, closing the door with a spring behind her.

Directly her eyes fell upon the face of the creole she understood all.

"She here!" she screamed out. "I see, I see! It is a trap. She knows that I hold the fate of her lover, Mark Allardyce, in my hands, and she has thought to gag me, so that she might save him!"

"You have guessed my plan to a nicety," said Flora calmly.

Lotty confronted her with the eyes of a fiend.

"I have guessed it and I have defeated it," she answered.

"Indeed? Are you sure?"

"Certain. The evidence against him has passed out of my hands."

"I know it," said Flora; "part of it is lodged with your solicitor; the rest remains with your principal witness—he who came up from Galescombe with you to-night."

"And if so?" asked Lotty.

"Why," was the reply, "no arrangement could be more satisfactory. Your solicitor has betrayed you—your witness is, by this time, our prisoner."

Lotty looked incredulous, but the manner of Flora Angerstein was calm, cool, and convincing.

"You hear?" said his lordship. "You are defeated. But we will accept you as an ally."

"No!" shouted the passionate woman, "from this moment I tear you out of my heart, Sandoun, as I tear the leaf from this book,—it was a Bible which she snatched up and tore as she spoke—" and I swear from this moment to devote my life to your destruction!"

CHAPTER LXXIX.

HOW RABY PLAYED HIS PART.

Alas! I'm sore beset: let never man
For sake of lucre aim against his soul.

Douglas.

WHILE this scene was being enacted in the private drawing-room at the boarding house, Thaddeus Angerstein sat in a room below, reading a newspaper.

He did not make much progress with it, however.

Leaders on India and German politics, proceedings in Parliament over the ballot question, details of cattle shows, and rifle meetings, paragraphs about fires and shipwrecks, and suicides and so forth, filled up the tempting pages, yet Thaddeus could not be said to read any of them. Whatever he began seemed to run into something else, and so left an odd jumble in the mind as if the paper had been a literary kaleidoscope.

The fact was, that all the while the man's thoughts were pre-engaged.

He was expecting to hear Raby's knock every minute.

There was another little matter also connected with that house to which Lotty had been traced in the cab, on which he was anxiously waiting for some report.

If hour after hour passed, and neither Raby's knock was heard at the door, nor any messenger came charged with the news he was anticipating, both disappointments resulted from very natural causes, and one of these it may be as well forthwith to explain.

We know that it was very late when the lawyer, Mr. Abernethy Plunkett, lighted Kingston Meredith from the door of his offices, after vainly waiting for Lotty, herself a prisoner, and so unable to join them.

As the sharp, red-faced, white-headed old gentleman closed the door, and went shading a flaring candle along the draughty passage back to his office, where a spot of bright, red fire still burned in the grate, he was startled by a sudden noise.

It was like the rattling of the handle of a door accompanied by a suppressed cry.

"What's that? What's that?" he ejaculated aloud, with a nervous, catching voice.

Not that he was frightened, for he was no coward, but any noise startles one in an empty, rambling old house, in the dead of night.

There was no response in words, but the sound continued louder than ever, and Plunkett stopping to think, and wiping the perspiration from his brow as he did so, came to a conclusion as to what it was.

"There's somebody in the short-hand room," he muttered.

It was not a pleasant thought. The mere fact of a man concealed in the office at that hour was bad enough in itself, but the short-hand room, as Plunkett had explained to Meredith, was so placed that anyone concealed in it could hear every word that passed in his private office; and how much of moment had passed there that night!

Acting upon impulse, as a brave man would in such a case, Plunkett walked straight to the door of the room he had named, and had convincing proof that his surmise was right, because there the sound was loudest.

The key was in the lock on the outside, he noticed that as he came up, and putting his hand on it, he found that it had been turned, so as to lock in whoever might have ventured into the room.

"Who's there?" he demanded in a loud voice.

"Let me out, pray let me out!" cried a muffled voice.

"Not I," replied the lawyer, "you've got in: get out."

And he made a pretence of going off, still, however, intently listening, making up his mind what to do.

"But Mr. Plunkett, sir, don't go! Don't leave me! I can explain all; I can indeed. Oh, let me out! Let me out!"

There was a familiar tone about the voice which reassured the lawyer, and stepping back on tip-toe, he suddenly turned the lock, and opened the door.

A man rolled on the floor at his feet.

"Get up!" he cried, administering a vicious kick; "who is it?"

"Me, sir—Raby!" said that individual, wincing at the kick, and looking up with a deplorably woe-begone face.

"Why, you precious scoundrel," exclaimed Plunkett, so enraged that he no longer stammered, "what are you doing here? Get up! You rascal, you sneaking, eaves-dropping hound, how dare you attempt to play the spy upon me and my actions? How dare you take advantage of your position in this house to pry into my secrets? Be off with you, sir, be off!"

With his upraised foot he was about to administer another kick, when Raby, turning and clasping his hands, cried in a beseeching voice:

"Hear me, sir, only hear me!"

"I won't," said the lawyer.

"For your own sake if not for mine!" pleaded the man.

And that was a sort of plea that Plunkett could understand. His countenance relaxed the least bit in the world.

"No, no!" he said, but much more mildly; "how do I know that you're not here to rob me, to murder me, to practise I don't know what outrages, you sneaking cur?"

But, in spite of his words, Plunkett had changed his tactics. He no longer pushed Raby toward the door, but, with one hand on his right shoulder, turned him sharp round into the office he himself had just quitted.

"Now!" he said, shutting the door and standing with his back against it, and confronting the trembling clerk, "what have you to say for yourself?"

"My explanation is very brief, sir," said Raby; "I went into that room this afternoon just before the office closed, to look at some books, and, having been up late at a party last night, and being very drowsy, I'd no sooner sat down than I fell asleep."

"It's a lie!" shouted Plunkett; "you went into that room for a purpose. You remained there for a purpose. I can read it in your villainous eyes, and your hang-dog looks. Confess, now; what was your object?"

"I had none," replied the culprit; "I slept, I was awake by the sound of voices in this room—I found that the door had been locked upon me——"

"And you listened?"

"I could not help myself."

"You listened, and you heard all that passed between me and my client?"

"All!"

The peculiar emphasis which Raby threw on that word was unmistakable. It was accompanied, too, by a flashing of the eye which, slight as it was, the lawyer saw and understood.

It meant defiance.

Its effect upon Plunkett was the reverse of what might have been expected. He did not fire at it, but his manner changed.

"Good," he said, drily and sharply, "sit down." And he pushed the young man toward the seat just quitted by Meredith, while he crossed to his own chair on the other side of the fire. "You're a young man, Raby," he continued, "with your fortune to make, and if you have heard all that has passed in this room to-night, you know that you have in me a man not indisposed to assist you in the task."

"I own it," said Raby, touched by the manner as well as the words of his employer, "and I'm not ungrateful——"

"Stay," said Plunkett, "first hear me. And let me tell you that, as a young man, you have begun badly. I won't say a word about your extravagant and frivolous pursuits: those are your own affairs, you will say, and so they are to an extent; but what about the consequences of them? Your presence here to-night, your conduct while here—these are among the consequences, and these are matters for me to speak upon."

Raby was about to interpose.

The lawyer held up his hand, as if to deprecate interference, and continued, only stammering now and then, as was the case when he was thoroughly roused. "You tell me that you were in that room to-night by accident. My reply is that it is untrue—that I don't believe you. Oh, tut, tut, I know all about it. You don't like being called a liar. Few men do. 'Tis so despicable a vice that men who will plead guilty to all the crimes of the de-decalogue feel their blood boil at the bare imputation of it. Nevertheless, I tell you that you've spoken falsely to-night. Why, man, your very actions show it. Do you think that I, as an honest man, waking up to the knowledge that I was in a position which forced me to play the spy, should have remained there till I had mastered important secrets never intended for my ears? No: the honest man's course would have been to cry out at once: the knave's course to possess himself of another's secrets, and then dictate terms. That has been your course; that is what you are about to do."

The sharp, glittering eye of the lawyer was upon the young man, who cowered beneath it.

"I protest——" he nevertheless began.

"Pshaw!" cried the other, impatiently. "No lies. And I have but one word further to add. As I've said, for a young man, you've begun badly. This very day I have made discoveries which convinced me that I have been robbed by you——"

"Oh, sir! sir!" cried Raby, suddenly changing to a deathly pallor.

"Robbed is the word," the lawyer went on, "and had I cared to do so, I might at once have taken proceedings against you. Had I entertained reasons for supposing you a thief, in the worst sense of that word, I should not have spared you; but I argued as a man of the world. I said this is a young, inexperienced lad, thrown into society without rudder or compass, intoxicated with the allurements of what he calls 'life,' and seduced on, from one expense to another, until the inevitable result is—crime. I might

take advantage of this desperate act; I might crush, but I will spare him. I will remove him from the scene of his temptations and his difficulties, and by one act of clemency make him perhaps an ornament to his profession and to society. With this resolve, I cast about me for an opportunity of serving and of saving you. Good-fortune presented an opening fitted for my purpose. You know, for you have listened and overheard, that I, this very night, recommended you to my client for the discharge of a delicate and difficult mission to Montreaux. And he accepted your services."

During this speech, Raby was gradually overcome with emotion, and now, regardless of his superb peg-tops and his immaculate attire generally, he threw himself on the ground, and seizing the lawyer's hand in both of his, bent over it, shedding bitter tears as he did so.

"Forgive me, sir!" he said, "your goodness has overpowered me. It only needed such words as these to make me confess all to you."

"There is something to confess then?" asked Plunkett.

"Yes, oh, yes! You were right, sir; I did go into the room to listen to what might happen to transpire in this office. I was tempted to do it, tempted beyond my strength."

"No!" cried Plunkett. "No man was ever tempted beyond his strength. Enough that you were tempted and you yielded. You admit that?"

"I do, freely, abjectly, but that is not the worst. The secret I have heard to-night would indeed be invaluable to the friends of the Earl of St. Omer; but I swear to you here, on my knees before Heaven, that I will never divulge it, nor shall they ever have my aid in obtaining what next to that, is most important to them—the papers on which the new claim to the earldom is founded."

"What!" said Plunkett, "they knew of those papers being in my possession, then?"

"Yes; and it was part of my object in remaining here to have possessed myself of them, and to have handed them over to my employer. That I should have assuredly done, but that the mention of Montreaux, and the mission on which you designed to send me, melted my heart, gave me new life and hope, and made me determine to confess all to you."

It was Plunkett's hand which raised the abject Raby from his knees.

"Go," he said! "I believe in your penitence, and your sincerity, and to prove my confidence in you, I suffer you to leave this office to-night, on your parole of honour, in full possession of a secret which, if divulged, would ruin my client's prospects—but which will not be divulged."

Raby caught at the hand of the hard, quaint lawyer, and pressed it eagerly.

"Divulged!" he cried; "never, never. God helping me—never!"

And with a heart full of joy and gratitude, he rushed from the office, and fearing to encounter the tempter at every step, hurried to the solitary chamber which he called "home."

So you are in possession of the reason why Thaddeus Angerstein did not hear Raby's knock that night.

CHAPTER LXXX.

WHAT FLORA'S BRACKET BOUGHT.

His unjust unkindness, that in all reason should have quenched her love, hath, like an impediment in the current, made it more violent and unruly.

Measure for Measure.

THERE was, it has been stated, a second transaction on that eventful night—the night preceding Mark Allardyce's appearance before the magistrates—for the particulars of which Thaddeus Angerstein waited and watched.

As we know, Flora, in her passionate desperation, was prepared to do and to dare anything that might save the worthless Mark. Had it been necessary for her to have embued those soft, dimpled hands of hers in blood, I doubt if she would have hesitated, in that her dire extremity.

All that she insisted on to herself was that Mark must be saved.

"He must live! He shall live!" so she had insisted to herself; "I will die for him; but he shall live!"

So, while his poor mother sat shaken with grief, powerless to do more than to pray for him incessantly; while Blanche shrank aghast with terror from the hideous charge; while the earl felt that from the very suspicions which had rested on him so long, he ought to take no steps in the matter, Flora devoted every moment to thought or action; to plotting, scheming, or watching the issue of her subtly-devised plans.

The question of the marriage and the money depending upon it, which she had been so interested in

for Mark's sake, had now become of secondary interest to Flora, though she did not permit either Sandown or her brother to relax in their efforts to bring it about, and to defeat Meredith's claim.

It was Mark's safety which had now become of paramount importance, and to that she devoted all her thoughts.

Thus, five minutes after she had gloated over Lotty as a prisoner at the house in Great Queen Street, she had taken a cab, and was off to the house which has been named as belonging to the woman called "Carry," and to which Lotty had driven on coming from the train.

Leaving the cab at the corner, she walked to the house and gave two distinct, but quiet rings.

There was a long pause, then a man came to the door without a light and admitted her, neither speaking until the door was closed, and the man had led the visitor to the door of a back parlour which he cautiously opened.

A tallow candle was burning upon the table. Its light, obstructed by a long mushroom-shaped wick, was not brilliant; but it served to reveal the features of the two persons entering the room. In those of the man it was not difficult to recognize the hideous being who was called the Vampire.

"Well?" asked Flora anxiously, "has all happened rightly?"

"Couldn't ha' been better ma'am, if you'd done it yourself," was the husky reply.

"Tell me how you have proceeded?" said the woman, sinking exhausted on the corner of a wooden chair, and resting her sable muff on the table.

"Why, ma'am, it was like this," replied the Vampire, "as I told you at the very first, when you named this business to me. 'It's the luckiest thing in all the world,' I says, 'that that very house is kept by my friend Bob.' Long Bob we used to call him, 'cos he is a long 'un, but that's neither here nor there—it's the luckiest thing,' was my very words, 'as Bob happens to keep that identical house. Which he's understrapper at Bedlam, and has had to do with lunatics, off and on, this twenty years, and his pay not being so much as it might be, he says to his old gal, 'a lodgin' house,' he says, 'well looked after, is a fortune; and with a padded room for such patients, as their friends don't like 'em to go into a public 'sylum——'"

"Yes, yes," interposed Flora, "I understand. In a word, your friend Bob's wife took this house to let lodgings, and you take occasional insane patients as private boarders. But how about to-night?"

"Yes, ma'am, it happened in this way. Directly the gentleman as they call Hildred was gone, I slips over. I was a-watching under the archway where you'd left me, and I gives Bob the office and your letter; and he takes the letter up, and we sits down in this very room and does a pipe and has a pint or so. Well, no sooner has the young 'ooman time to read your letter than down she flounces, bonnet and shawl on, and out of the house she goes."

"And who did she leave behind?" asked Flora.

"Well, that's what I didn't know. You'd told me that she'd brought a man in, you believed, and Bob said his lodger was the woman Carry, and for all he know'd she was upstairs. And so it turned out; for while we was a-waiting, talking over what we should do, we hears her a calling out for Jane—that's Bob's gal—and a dratting, and a mildly cussin' her for not being in the house—which Bob had given her a holiday a purpose. 'That's gin,' says Bob. 'What's gin?' says I. 'Why, what she's a hollerin' to our Jane to fetch. Never mind,' he says, 'all right, she'll go herself now.' And sure enough she comes down and slinks out o' the house like a shot. 'Now's our time,' says Bob, and with that he jumps up, takes the light, and up-stairs he goes, I after him to the room as the woman Carry rents. We tries the handle, but the door was locked. But Bob wasn't to be done. He winks his eye at me and takes a key out of his own pocket—it's the way o' them lodg'ing-house people to have two keys to everythin', I am told—and in a minnit the door was open."

"Well?"

Flora was greatly excited at this point, and could scarcely contain her impatience at the tedious fashion in which the man told his story.

"Well, ma'am, when I went in there I see a man with a face as white as that han'kerchief o' your'n sittin' like a ghost glowerin' over the fire."

"What kind of man?" asked Flora. "Can't you describe him to me? Was he a gentleman or a common person? What was his general appearance? How was he dressed?"

"His gen'ral appearance," replied the Vampire, "was a bag o' bones. He migh' ha' been a skeleton a sittin' there for any flesh there was upon him, or any life there seemed in him. His dress was a blanket and a pair o' cord trowsers chiefly, and he sat a cowering and lowering, and a spreading out his thin hands over the fire that made 'em pink, and so as you could see through 'em like."

"Who,—what can this man be?" asked Flora, rather speaking to herself than to her companion. "At all events, he is in the last extremity of life, you say?"

"He's a walking ghost," was the Vampire's answer.

"Well, go on. What happened?"

"Why, ma'am, directly he—see us in the room he started up with big eyes as seemed just going to start out of his head, and his teeth rattled like dice in a box, and he was all of a tremble. 'What do you want?' he said, faint-like. 'Oh, never you mind,' says Bob, in the way he talks to the poor cracked devils, 'we ain't goin' to do you no harm.' 'Go away. Leave this room,' says the poor creature, 'you have no right here.' 'That's where you make a mistake,' says Bob, creeping up to him gradual, 'it's you've no right here. But,' says he, 'I ain't going to turn you out such a night as this, only I've got a room ready for you, and I must trouble you to move into it.' With that he whips out of his pocket a great hankercher that I'd seen him fiddlin' about with, and pouring scent into, as I thought, (for he's a bit of a swell, Bob is,) and before you could say, Jack Robinson, he has it over the poor devil's face, eyes, mouth and all, and ties it behind his head. I twiggid his game in a minnit, and seized the fellow's arms, and then we took him between us and carried him up to the top of the house—to the snugget little box you ever see, all padded and comfortable, good enough for a race 'oss, and there we lays him down, quiet as a lamb. Then Bob whips off the hankercher. 'He'll do now,' he says; and so we left him!"

"That room is safe?" asked Flora.

"So safe that you might search the house twenty times and never find the door of it. 'Tain't a door, neither; it's only a plank in the wall, that you can push open, if you know the way."

"Good; and now, when the woman returned, what happened?"

"Oh, when that Carry come back, my eyes, there was such a rumpus. She rang the bell, she stormed, she slanged, she swore—and there that Bob stood, as meek as a lamb, lookin' as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. He'd seen nothink, of course. No, nor he hadn't heard nothink. He'd been a smokin' his pipe on the quiet, and takin' his grog on the quiet, and never botherin' himself about nothink nor nobody. 'But,' she says, 'there's a poor sick man as I left here safe on'y two minutes ago—and where is he? He can't have got up the flue or jumped out o' winder.' 'No,' says Bob, 'it's more'n likely as he's gone out o' the door.' 'No, he wouldn't do it,' says Carry. 'Very well, then, search the house, if you like,' Bob made answer. But all she did was to throw 'erself into the chair, and begin to pipe her eyes, and to rave and storm, and swear, that when Lotty got back she'd kill her."

"But Lotty has not got back yet?" asked Flora, with a significant leer.

"No—not yet."

"Capital!" thought the creole woman, her eye glowing with satisfaction over the details she had just listened to. "I shall save Mark yet. Without this hideous woman and her witness there can be nothing against him strong enough to warrant them even in sending him for trial. Once free again, he must leave England with me—oh, yes, yes, he will go with me!"

There was a pause, during which the Vampire played nervously with his pipe, as if he would have liked to light it, but feared lest it might prove disagreeable to his customer.

"This man is very ill?" asked Flora, suddenly.

"Very. On his last legs, I should say."

"It is possible that he might die up there, then?"

"What, up in the padded room? Very possible, I should say. I wouldn't give twopence for his chance of life."

"If he should," said Flora, significantly; "I say, if he should, you would know how to dispose of him, perhaps, without alarming the neighbourhood?"

The Vampire looked at her.

He saw that as she spoke she unclasped a bracelet, heavy with gems in antique setting, from her round arm.

"That depends," he said, dryly.

Keeping an eye upon her, he saw that she held the jewels flashing in the light for a second or two, then twisting the bracelet round her forefinger, looking from it up to his ravenous eyes.

"You would have little difficulty, I should think," she said. "You are always shipping."

"But there's the risk," was the Vampire's remark.

"Your goods usually are accompanied by a risk, are they not?" Flora asked, innocently.

"Often. But where the risk's great, the profit's great likewise," said the fellow, fascinated by the glitter of the gems.

"Exactly. I see we understand each other. The thing is practicable, and it is desirable."

She put down the costly bracelet on the little table

close to where the man's great, dark, hairy fist rested, and in a second his horny fingers had closed over it and covered it up. Before another word was spoken, it was dropped, as one would drop an apple, into the yawning pocket of his fustian-coat.

"Your friend Bob is safe?" asked Flora. "We may rely on him?"

"Safe as the bank!" said the Vampire.

"That will do, then. I must be going. Remember that there is life and death in your hands, and that if you serve me in this, I will never forget the favour. Good-night."

She caught up her muff, thrust her little hands into it, rose, and left the house.

"So far, all is right," she muttered, as she encountered the night air, with a shudder. "Now, if I could only get a few hours' sleep, I could face to-morrow with confidence. But sleep! How can I sleep when he is lying wakeful in his cell, and counting the weary moments? He does not know that I shall save him. He believes himself abandoned. Great Heaven! if, in desperation, he should be driven to destroy himself!"

Flora Angerstein might have spared herself the torture which that fear occasioned her.

Even as she braved the bitter night-winds in his cause, Mark was sleeping as soundly and placidly upon his prison straw mattress, as ever he had slept on his own luxurious couch.

His was one of those natures which look extremes in the face with calmness. Brute as he was, warped and distorted as his nature had become by the unbridled indulgence of all its fiercest passions, he did not lack some of the qualities that go to make up heroes. Thus, though he had yielded, with a kind of superstitious weakness, to the gathering terrors on that night, when the very air seem filled with accusing voices, and took the hue of blood, he was essentially brave; and now that the paroxysm had passed, now that the real danger of his position stood clearly defined before him, he did not shrink from it.

"I've had my fling!" he had said, in his loose way, on reviewing his position on the first night of his imprisonment—"I've had my fling, and I must pay for it. I'm unlucky—that's the fact. Nobody but me would have have had such temptations as I've had, and if they were tempted, they'd have got over the business without being found out. Well, well, I've played the fool; but I did it for the best, or the worst. Hang it, who cares?"

Not a wholesome state of mind that for a man going to a violent death with heavy crimes upon his soul! But it was in the nature of the man to think thus lightly of serious things, and out of that lightness of thought sprang the tendency to commit desperate actions on little more than mere impulse.

At twelve o'clock that night Mark was awakened from a peaceful dream of wandering through the fields about Redrath, as he used to wander when a boy, by the entrance of the gaoler.

"Well, Johns!" he said, starting up briskly, "any news?"

"Not much, sir," said that functionary, who had received cogent reasons for treating his prisoner with deference and respect; "I saw him again to-night, when I was off duty for my home."

"You mean Thaddeus Angerstein?"

"Yes, sir, he was at the Hen and Chickens as usual."

"And what did he say?"

"Oh, he was as light and as sanguine as usual, and he tipped me to tell you that it'll be all right. He said Meredith would be nowhere, and that Lotty was bought off, and as for the other party—you know who the other party is?—he would be squared."

Mark's face assumed an anxious look at the mention of that "other party."

"What do they mean," he said, "by talking always of that mysterious third party? I know no more than the dead who it can be, and that fool of a lawyer of mine never troubles himself to worm it out. Well, well, was that all?"

"No, I was to give a special message to you, which he read from a paper in his hand. I was to tell you that Flora had not forgotten you!"

"Curse Flora!" cried Mark; "I hate the very name of her!"

"I was to say that she had taken your cause in hand, and that you might trust to her to see all right."

Mark's lip curled up a sneer.

"She see it all right! Yah! What the deuce I ever saw in that woman I don't know. A sly, designing, serpent of a creature, with more black blood than white in her veins, and more devil than angel in her soul. The less she meddles with my affairs the better for me—aye, and the better for her, too, if ever I get out of this, and so you may tell Master Thaddeus, with my compliments, and be hanged to her!"

And this was the woman who was debarring herself rest and food, who was encountering perils which might recoil on her own head, lavishing her money,

stripping herself of her jewels, doing all that a loving, frantic woman of her strong nature must do in such a case!

Happily she was unconscious of these bitter words. Having delivered his message, Johns was about to quit the cell.

Mark called him back.

"You've seen nothing of my lawyer?" he asked.

"Not since the morning."

"You spoke to him then?"

"Yes."

"And he told you —"

"That the charge must break down, unless —"

"Unless what?"

"Why, sir, unless this one witness that was kept in the background should happen to turn out stronger than was expected."

"Nonsense!" cried Mark; "I tell you that's all a delusion—a subterfuge. The whole case is got up out of spite to me. There's nothing in it. I am an innocent man, and there is no human being who can come forward and convict me of a crime I never committed."

"I desay, sir. 'Tis as you say, no doubt," mumbled the gaoler; and with that and a cordial "good-night" he left his prisoner to his thoughts.

Those thoughts then were occupied by one subject only. Hour after hour Mark, now thoroughly aroused and worked up to a state of excitement, turned on his mattress. And as he did so, he again and again consoled himself with this reflection: "Only a voice from the grave can convict me!"

(To be continued.)

CHRISTMAS TIME.

'Tis Christmas time! 'tis Christmas time!

All happy let us be;
And merrily let our voices chime,
Aloud with songs of glee!
'Tis joy to be with friends sincere,
And hear the laugh go round;
It filleth well the heart with cheer,
For life is in the sound!

'Tis Christmas time, &c.

This is no time the mind should be
A harbinger of care;
No, 'tis a time when mirth and glee
Should be found everywhere!
Then we will raise our voices high,
And sing with might and main:
Old Father Christmas, hear our cry
We welcome thee again!

'Tis Christmas time, &c.

T. F. K.

ETIQUETTE OF CHRISTMAS PARTIES.

CHRISTMAS parties are especially devoted to the reunion of relations and intimate friends; it is therefore customary, on these occasions, to throw aside the ceremony and constraint which society ordinarily imposes, and for each person to determine upon being happy himself, and to contribute to the happiness of those around him.

Young ladies, especially, should not display an ill-timed prudery at certain little freedoms which this season allows, such as kissing under the mistletoe. The youthful should not object to regulate their amusements for the convenience of the aged; nor should the latter disdain to enter into the sports of the young.

The good things provided by the host and hostess should be more homely than upon other occasions; and there should be a marked heartiness in their demeanour towards those they entertain. Those who assemble may be freer in their intercourse than on ordinary occasions, the good wishes of the season being on every tongue.

Dress should be less displayed now than at the fashionable parties that will commence about the middle of January; nor should the richer guests endeavour, by a display of trinkets and jewellery, to outshine their humbler relatives and friends; in a word, a Christmas party is supposed to level all grades and distinctions for the time being, with a view of contributing more certainly to the general happiness of the company assembled.

MOOSE KILLING.—In 1859, an Indian was coming into a large lake, near the Lake of the Woods, with his canoe in search of wild rice. He had no gun with him, only his paddle and a knife; straight before him he saw three moose swimming across the lake—he killed them all. He paddled as fast as he could alongside one of them, and threw his blanket over his head. Leaving this one to swim about, he gave chase to another—caught him, and threw his coat over his head, and left him to swim about too; he then gave chase to the third, but if it had not been for a fair wind he would never have caught him. As it was, he only

came up to him when within fifty yards off shore. The moose was tired and did not make much way. The Indian hit him on the nose and stunned him for a moment; he then gave him a rap on the head, and finished him after a few more blows. But it requires very skilful paddling to kill a moose in the water, and he would not have done it so easily if the poor animal had not been tired with swimming across a broad lake. After he had dragged this one into shallow water, he turned to look where the others were; he saw them swimming round and round in the middle of the lake—they could not see which way to go. After resting awhile, the Indian paddled up to the one nearest him and turned him towards shore—always keeping a little behind, and going from one side to the other, according as the moose wandered from a straight line. When he came near the land, he paddled up to him and served him as he had done the first—tied him to his canoe and tugged him into shallow water. He then went after the third, who was still swimming round and round, but very weak. He got him with difficulty near the shore, and despatched him in the same style as the others.—*Explorations in the Interior of the Labrador Peninsula. By Henry Youle Hind, M.A., F.R.G.S.*

SCIENCE.

CALIFORNIAN COLOURS.—A paint, or series of paints, has recently been discovered in California, which is said to yield seventy-four different tints, varying from vermilion to dove-colour. If all based on mercury, as vermilion is, however, many of them may be of little worth, from the unfixed and changeable nature of most mercurial colours.

NEW USE OF BALLOONS.—Some one suggests an economical way of lighting cities, and proposes to apply it to Paris. Balloons, from the cars of which are to emanate an electric light, are to be fixed at certain stations, and hover over the city, in the proportion of one balloon to 50,000 persons. How are the balloons to be managed in gales of wind?

RAILWAY BREAKS.—The new railway break, the clever invention of a lady, having completely satisfied the engineers, as it brings up a train at a speed of 40 miles within 450 metres, is the invention of Mlle. Micas. It appears that the principle is lifting the wheel a trifle off the rail. No doubt it will find its way to England, where the directors of railways are proverbially so careful of the lives of their passengers.

STEEL SHIPS.—Considerable interest amongst nautical men has been excited by the launch of two vessels from the building yard of Messrs. Jones, Quiggin, and Co., Liverpool, upwards of 1,000 tons each, built with steel, instead of iron. This material affords great advantage in the construction of floating bodies, being stronger and lighter than iron or wood; thereby affording greater capacity with less draught of water. Up to a recent period the expense of manufacturing steel, and producing it in sufficient size and quantity, has precluded its use for this purpose. At the liberal entertainment given after the launch, Mr. Jones, in returning thanks on behalf of his firm to the toast drunk by the company for their success, stated these were the first vessels ever constructed of steel for ocean purposes, and he went into a very interesting detail of the superior advantages which, in every respect, it possessed over the ordinary material.

ANTIDOTE TO STRYCHNINE.—Dr. Riederholl (says *Galignani*) has successfully administered fatty substances as an antidote to strychnine. From experiments instituted on about thirty dogs and rabbits, it appears that the absorption of strychnine and its compounds is prevented by administering fat, butter, or oil, the first being more active. Time is thus gained to proceed to other remedies, such as emetics; but, as any fatty substance also impedes the action of the latter, they must be given in larger doses, or else the stomach-pump should be used. At all events, fat seems to be more efficacious than other antidotes in the case of poisoning by strychnine, especially more so than morphine, conicine, or aconitine. The *Mechanics' Magazine* states that a remedy for the poison of strychnine and mushroom has been discovered, and consists in making the poisoned person eat large quantities of refined sugar, and in desperate cases opening a vein and injecting water in which sugar has been dissolved.

WONDERS OF ELECTRICITY.—Our illustrious countryman, Faraday, states that there is as much electricity employed to combine together the gases in one drop of water, as would, were they to be instantaneously liberated, cause the brightest flash of lightning, sufficient to rend the majestic oak or destroy animal life. Such, then, is the universality of electricity, that it must be sought for everywhere; flowing in an ever-constant stream from the centre of our system, the sun, it is taken up by the planetary

spheres, each having its influence upon our earth, passing round our globe in ever-varying currents; it is the cause of terrestrial magnetism; it rules the storms, the clouds collect and are dispersed under its influence; descending lower, it stimulates vegetation and animal life—it is, in fact, vitality; it burrows in the bowels of the earth, causing the aggregation of metals into mines, and deposits precious stones by polar influence; the study of electricity is therefore universal, and every science must be exhausted before the limits of electricity can be ascertained.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY THE AID OF ARTIFICIAL LIGHT.—A French savant, M. M. A. Gaudin, has invented a new lamp, by the aid of which the photographer can employ the hours after sunset in multiplying negative copies from the positive pictures obtained during the day. A light of the kind required has long been sought for, even before the art of photography was understood, for the purposes of lighting ships and signalling. Oxygen, expelled from a receiver by any convenient degree of pressure, passes into a receptacle containing ether, or some spirit rich in hydrogen; on issuing from this it will, if ignited, burn precisely like alcohol. If, however, we cause the saturated gas to mingle with a stream of pure oxygen, flowing from the first-mentioned receiver, the force of the currents being regulated by suitable stop-cocks, the jet of flame impinging on a cylinder of lime produces an intense light, resembling Drummond's in every particular. M. Gaudin's experiments are very interesting, as they apparently supply us with a means of obtaining the Drummond light with oxygen alone, thus obviating to a great extent the risk which has hitherto attended the use of that light. We much fear, however, that the high price of oxygen gas must, except in exceptional circumstances, preclude anything like a general adoption of the invention.

BENEATH THE MISTLETOE

Old friends all meet so cheerily,
So heartily and merrily,
So pleasantly that verily

It makes one's heart to glow;
While youth and age unbending,
Are in the pastime blending,
And over them's depending
A branch of mistletoe.

Then merrily surrounding
Where music's notes are sounding,
The youthful ones are bounding
As we did years ago;
May all the world know happiness,
May Christmas every Christian bless,
And all to obtain one dear caress
Beneath the mistletoe. J. E. T.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

THE ACTION OF OXYGEN ON WINE.—At the last meeting of the Academy of Sciences, M. Berthelot showed that ten cubic centimetres of oxygen are sufficient to destroy the bouquet of a litre of wine in a few minutes. Hence the importance of corking bottles carefully. Yet a small quantity of oxygen in a diluted state, as in atmospheric air, does not seem to spoil the bouquet, owing to the presence of carbonic acid in wine. The cause of the loss of bouquet in wine after long keeping appears to be the gradual absorption of oxygen, which affects it as would the addition of a mineral water, such as that of Vevy.

WATERING POT PLANTS IN WINTER.—There are a few old but good and simple rules which gardeners have among them, attention to which is the great secret of their successes. 1st. Take up the pot in your hand, feel the weight of it; your knowledge of weight and quantity will tell you if such a body of matter is just or not. 2nd. With your knuckles strike the side of the pot; if the sound educed be a dull, dead, heavy sound, the plant is right, or nearly so; if it give out a sharp ring or light sound, the plant wants water. Attention to these rules will give you the knowledge you desire. Water them when the fibres are just beginning to want moisture, but not before; give till the water reaches every fibre, and then wait contentedly till the plant and soil ask for more; a constant dribble of water is just the most senseless process that you can adopt. Fancy a plant from some hill-side, or ridge, or mountain-top, subjected to this treatment, making a marsh or bog plant of it—is it to be wondered at that it should succumb and finally die? and, *vice versa*, many otherwise beautiful marsh plants are, by us badly grown because we do not, either from ignorance or imperfect circumstances, give them the treatment they need. No helter-skelter waterings should be given in the winter months; not a drop of water should be given that can be by any means avoided. The wetter plants are, the more subject they are to feel the chills of cold,

frosty weather. Every plant, when watering is demanded, should be carefully watered separately; and if the operator has not accustomed himself to give to each as much as will suffice without spilling a drop or allowing any to run through the pot, he should lift outside each pot that wants moistening, water it there, and replace it when thoroughly drained. A tank of rain-water in the house, in contiguity to the flue, will always contain water of the right temperature. Cold water ought never to be given; better take the chill off such by throwing in a dash of hot water.

STATISTICS.

On Saturday a return was printed showing that in the month ending the 31st October, the declared value of beer and ale exported, was £26,841. In ten months it amounted to £393,979.

The quantity of coal required for Government vessels is really incredible. There are 350 steamers afloat in the service burning coal. The Ironsides alone burns two tons per hour, 48 tons per day, or 16,000 tons per annum. 1,500,000 tons is the estimated quantity required for this species of the service.

TRADE WITH INDIA.—The statistics of the trade of Calcutta, which have been compiled by Mr. Wood, the secretary of the Bengal Chamber of Commerce, show that the import trade for the thirty-two years, 1830-1862, was £244,044,215, of which £69,652,961 represents treasure, and £174,392,154 merchandise. It is to be regretted that we have not similar figures for Bombay and Madras, but we shall not err if we double these to represent the trade of both. We thus learn the astounding facts that, for a period less by a year than the third of a century, nearly £70,000,000 of bullion and more than £170,000,000 of merchandise were poured into Calcutta; and that in the same period India took not less than £140,000,000 of treasure from Europe, and £350,000,000 worth of goods.

WINTERS IN OLDEN TIME.

In 1664 the cold was so intense that the Thames was covered with ice sixty one inches thick. Almost all the birds perished.

In 1693 the cold was so excessive that the famished wolves entered Vienna and attacked beasts, and even men. Many people in Germany were frozen to death in 1695, and 1699 was nearly as bad.

In 1709 occurred that famous winter called, by distinction, the Cold Winter. All the rivers and lakes were frozen, and even the sea for several miles from the shores. The ground was frozen nine feet deep. Birds and beasts were struck dead in the fields, and men perished by thousands in their houses. In the south of France the plantations were almost destroyed; nor have they yet recovered that fatal disaster. The Adriatic sea was frozen, and even the Mediterranean about Genoa; and the citron and orange groves suffered extremely in the finest parts of Italy.

In 1776 the winter was so intense that people travelled across the straits from Copenhagen to the province of Senis in Sweden.

In 1729, in Scotland, multitudes of cattle and sheep were buried in the snow.

In 1749 the winter was scarcely inferior to that of 1709. The snow lay ten feet deep in Spain and Portugal. The Zuyder Zee was frozen over, and thousands of people went across it. And the lakes in England froze.

In 1744 the winter was very cold. Snow fell in Portugal to the depth of twenty-three feet on a level.

In 1754 and 1755 the winters were very severe and cold. In England the strongest ale, exposed to the air in a glass, was covered with ice one-eighth of an inch thick.

In 1771 the Elbe was frozen to the bottom.

In 1776 the Danube bore ice five feet thick below Vienna. Vast numbers of the feathered and finny tribes perished.

The winters of 1774 and 1775 were uncommonly severe. The Little Belt was frozen over.

CHRISTMAS CAROLS.—Christmas carols have had a remarkable history. At one time they were church hymns, and that only; at another, although still hymns of religious joy, they were intended rather for domestic than church use; while in another phase, they were elements in Christmas festivity, neither evincing religious thoughts nor couched in reverent language. Two of these three sorts of carols often prevailed at one time, and sometimes all three. As to the word itself, etymologists are not agreed whether it was derived directly from the Latin or mediately through the French or Italian; but the meaning has always been accepted as that of a hymn

of joy, especially as applied to those (by far the larger number) intended for Christmas. Hymns or songs of joy we know to have been components in the religious ceremonies of the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Romans, and other ancient nations; and the mention in the Bible of "Jubal's lyre," "David's harp," "Miriam's song," &c., shows how largely music was concerned with the Jewish ceremonies. It has been said, not inappropriately, that the first real Christmas and Christian carol was the song of the angels mentioned by St. Luke—"Gloria in excelsis," (Glory to God in the highest); for it was a song of joy in relation to the nativity. The hymns of the early Christians, adverted to by St. Paul and St. James, were probably in the nature of carols. It is known, from other sources, that the bishops and clergy, after the apostolic times, were wont to sing carols together in church on Christmas day.

FACETIE.

A POZER.—If a man swears roundly to a falsehood, can he be found guilty of flat perjury?—*Fun.*

WHY ARE QUACKS LIKE RAILWAY ENGINES?—Because there's no getting on without puffing.—*Fun.*

MR. NOGGS, speaking of a blind wood-sawyer, says, "While none ever saw him *see*, thousands have seen him *saw*."

"**THERE'S** sweet music in dreams," said an old gentleman. "Yes, there may be," said his wife; "but I hear nothing of it, except a snore."

GRANDMOTHER used to say to Grandfather: "It is no use quarreling, my dear, when you know we must make it up again."

DECEIVED by the name of Marie Escudier into the belief that Marie must be a woman, an English admirer has written to offer marriage to the talented author, but Marie—is a man!

WORTH TRYING.—A dashing and fashionable widow says she thinks of suing some gentleman for a breach of promise, so that the world may know she is in the market.

CHEAP LADIES.—A man had a sign up, "Cheap Ladies' Shoes for sale here." He found that not a woman entered his store. No wonder; the ladies don't like to be called cheap—they want to be called dear.

RAW RECRUITS.—"Pa, what is meant by raw recruits?" "It means soldiers who have not stood fire, child." "Oh, I know—same as chestnuts, after they are roasted they ain't raw!" "Pa" was done brown.

SAYING BY OUR SAGE IN THE STREETS.—The Yankees have held a Thanksgiving Day, and quite right too, for though they have not much to be thankful for, it is a great deal more than they deserve.—*Fun.*

THE ORDER, OF COURSE.—The Prince of Wales's papa-in-law has, we see, just given him an elephant. So our darling princess will always have her own ivory at hand, and there will never be another excuse for a corporation job in the hairbrush line.—*Punch.*

A FACT.

Guard (Taking half-price ticket): "Surely, miss, that young lady is over ten; are you not, miss?"

Dignified Little One: "Pray, are you not aware, guard, that it is extremely rude to ask a lady her age?"—*Punch.*

THE Boston Traveller observes: "New playing cards are spoken of, the pictures on which are to be taken from the forms and faces of men who have distinguished themselves in the war. Eminent contractors will sit for the knaves."

LOVE AS HARD AS A HORSE'S KICK.

"Charles, do you really love my daughter?"

"You know I do, Mrs. Simkins."

"How much do you love her?"

"I love her—I love her as hard—as hard as a horse can kick."

Mrs. Simkins was satisfied of the strength of his affection.

ADVANTAGES OF SMOKING TOBACCO!—We have often heard it stated that a pipe assists one much in arriving at a correct solution of a difficult problem. This arises, no doubt, from its giving one a bird's-eye view of the whole question.—*Punch.*

A DRY REMARK.—Poor Beecher! His success at Exeter Hall appears to have quite turned his head, and he is talking, if possible, even more nonsense than usual. We call one delicious blossom of oratory from his address to the New Yorkers. "Nothing was more charming to me, on leaving that arid ocean, which some insane persons are pleased to praise,—nothing struck me so much as the green fields, green trees, and exquisite lawns and plantations of England." All this allusion to the greenness he found in England (at Exeter Hall principally, we imagine) is intended to

be very flattering to the English. Why did he not add the delicate compliment of talking English? What on earth does he mean by an "arid" ocean? We don't expect Beechers to know Latin, but before they talk big words they should refer to their dictionaries. "Arid" means "parched, dried up," Mr. Beecher; and when you talk of the Atlantic as a parched ocean, there is a good deal of dry humour about the remark. Thank goodness, it is not dried up, for then, as an Irishman would say, we should be nearer neighbours to you. Perhaps you meant "an 'orrid ocean;" it is more the sort of language we should expect from you, because there is something really clever in the stupidity of the other reading. Be more careful in the future, Mr. Beecher, and don't be guilty of such arid and arrant nonsense again.—*Fun.*

TOTAL DEPRIVITY.

Deacon P—lately took occasion to administer a reproof for swearing, to Joe I—, a particularly wild fellow, but not intentionally "transgressional." Joe listened attentively to his words, and seemed to appreciate the exhortation, and when he had concluded, replied, as follows:

"The fact is, Deacon, that I swear a great deal, and you pray a great deal, but neither of us mean anything by it."

The deacon alludes to Joe as an instance of the most total depravity.

A GOOD WOMAN.—A little fellow, not more than five years old, hearing some gentlemen at his father's table discussing the familiar line, "An honest man's the noblest work of God," said he knew it wasn't true; his mother was better than any man that was ever made.

UNCLE AND NEPHEW.

Uncle: "George, have you got a pocket-book?"

Nephew: "No, sir."

Uncle: "Then I am very sorry, for I was going to give you a shilling to put into it."

George visits his uncle again, fortified with a large wallet.

Uncle: "George, have you got a pocket-book yet?"

Nephew (whose countenance brightens up):—"Yes, sir."

Uncle: "Oh, then, I am quite sorry, for I was going to give you a shilling to buy one."

A TAR'S SMILE.—A gent, whiskered up to the very eyes, was passing along the street, when a couple of jolly tars, on a land cruise, observed him. "Shiver my timbers, Jack," said one to the other, "that fellow looks like a rat peeping out of a bunch of oakum!"

MUNDEN'S JOKE.

Joe, as it is pretty well known, was once, at a dinner-party, placed before a haunch of venison and requested to carve it.

"Really, gentlemen," said he, "I do declare I know very little about table anatomy; I dare say now there is some particular cut in a haunch—some favourite *bon morceau*, I dare say there is—but I assure ye I am quite ignorant where to pick for it."

A dozen knives instantly started from the cloth, and Munden was instructed where the rich meat lay. Joe uttered a long string of thanks, worked out a prime slice, loaded it with sauce and jelly, and then, with the plate in his hand, looked through his glasses round the table. Every hand was ready, and every mouth prepared.

"Really, gentlemen," said the comedian, "I wish I could please you; but if I give the tit-bit to one, I shall offend the rest; so egad," added he, "I'll keep it myself, and let every gentleman help himself to what he likes best."

MOTTOES.—A vain man's motto is "win gold and wear it;" a generous man's, "win gold and share it;" a miser's, "win gold and spare it!" a profligate's, "win gold and spend it;" a broker's, "win gold and lend it;" a fool's, "win gold and end it;" a gambler's "win gold and lose it;" a wise man's, "win gold and use it."

THE LEFT LEG.—A traveller was lately boasting of the luxury of arriving at night after a hard day's journey to partake of the enjoyment of a well-cut ham and the left leg of a goose. "Pray, sir, what is the peculiar luxury of a left leg?" "Sir to conceive its luxury, you must find that it is the only leg that is left!"

A UNIVERSAL GENIUS.—"M. Alexander Dumas, père," says a Paris letter, "is at present engaged in writing an account of a shooting tour which he once took in Africa with one 'Sir Williams,' and actually rivals Gordon Cumming, of destructive memory, in his success with the rifle. Nor is this all: he has been offered by a Paris publisher the moderate sum of 60,000*fr.* down and 10,000*fr.* a-year if he will write a cookery book. The author of the *Trois Mousquetaires*, however, hesitates, fearing that his work would be above the average intellect of the kitchen, and so

would be useless. In his apology for refusing to emulate Mrs. Glass, M. Dumas quotes the following dictum of a *cuisinier* of Marseilles:—"I consider a cook who invents a dish a much greater man than an astronomer who discovers a star, for as far as stars are concerned, there are as many as we shall ever consume, but a new dish is a new pleasure for every man who knows how to dine." M. Dumas assures us that he is a very good cook."

A GREY FOX.

A few days since, as Mr. Henry Wells, of Stratford, was gathering nuts on the outskirts of the town, he was startled by the discharge of a double-barrelled gun quite near him. He had scarcely heard the report when a big Dutchman mounted the stone wall close by him, his hair sticking straight up, looking very wild about the eyes, and exclaimed, at the top of his voice:

"Vero is he? Vich vey did he go?"

"Where did who go?" said Mr. W.

"Vy, de vox."

"Fox?" says Mr. W. "I have not seen any fox. I saw a grey cat run by me just now."

"No, 'twas a grey vox."

"Oh, no, 'twas a cat," says Mr. W.

"Vell, by dam, I tot dat was a vox, so I blaze away both barrels at him."

After recovering somewhat from his excitement, the Dutchman started in pursuit of other game, muttering to himself as he went:

"Vell, I skare dat cat like de dyvil, anyhow."

A MAN in Peckhamshire was in the habit of praying nightly in a field behind a turf-dyke, and on one occasion exclaimed that, if the dyke were that moment to fall upon him, he would be justly punished for his sins. It did fall instantly, being pushed over by a concealed acquaintance, and Jock sung out from among the ruins, "Hech, sirs, it's an awfu' world this; a body canna say a thing in joke but it's ta'en in earnest."

NAPOLEON AND CONGRESS.

"Will you walk into my Congress?" said Napoleon to Great Britain,

"'Twill be the jolliest little party that ever you did sit in;

The way into my Congress is just across the water, And I want to put an end to this infernal slaughter

"Come, my dearest Britain, you're so strong and yet so wise,

With your Armstrong gun and armour plates, flash box, such a size;

You need not be afraid, dear, we shall always be united, So come along, don't tarry, you're affectionately invited."

"Ah! no, no," said Old Britain, "to ask me is in vain, Circumstances may arise which may cause us pain; Your affection I appreciate, your motives, too, are just, But then, dear Nap, in congresses I don't put my trust."

"Let us ever be united and keep our sword-blade bright,

Always fighting side by side, contending for the right, Till every nation shall love, honour, and be our firm ally."

But until this consummation let us keep our powder dry.—*Fun.*

"PUTTING YOUR FOOT IN IT."—A curious mode of trying the title to land is practised in Hindostan. Two holes are dug in the disputed spot, in each of which the lawyers on either side put one of their legs, and there remain until one of them is tired, or complains of being stung by insects—in which case his client is defeated. In this country it is generally the client, and not the lawyer, who "puts his foot in it."

HER "AFFINITY."

The other day we happened to call upon a very quiet and modest family of our acquaintance, and in the course of conversation spiritualism became a topic. Its demerits were pretty freely discussed, when in came a lady friend of the family. She seemed to become considerably excited on finding out the nature of our conversation, and with great warmth she waded into all spiritualists without mercy, till one of the ladies remarked:

"By the way, Jane, didn't you go to see old Dr. — the other day? What did he tell you?"

"Yes," replied Jane; "and the stupid old thing pretended to mesmerize himself, and he told me that when he was 'entranced,' as he called it, I must ask him any questions I liked and he would answer me satisfactorily. Well, as soon as he got off into a kind of sleep, I thought I would just try him a little, so I asked him where he was. He said that he was among the fairies in the spirit land. I then asked him what he saw. Would you believe me, the good-for-nothing old thing had the impudence to tell me that he saw—oh, I can't tell you what he said!"

"Why," remarked one of the ladies, "there can be no harm in your telling us what he said."

"Well, I don't know that there would be, if we were all alone, but I can't tell you before this gentleman."

"Oh, Jane, don't be so foolish; this gentleman needn't prevent your telling us," replied the ladies.

"Well, if there's no harm in it, he told me that he saw—oh, there's no use; I can't tell you now!" said Jane.

"Why, Jane, how can you be so silly? Tell us what he said, do."

"Well, if I must, the old wretch had the face to tell me that he saw my 'affinity,' so I left his house immediately, for I never had anybody to talk in that way to me before."

The other ladies all burst into laughter, and tried to explain to Jane the innocent meaning of the word, much to our amusement.

NOT LIVING ONES.—A jolly old fellow had an office next door to a doctor's shop. One day an elderly gentleman of the old foggy school blundered into the wrong shop. "Is the doctor in?" "Don't live here," said the lawyer, who was in full scribble over some old documents. "Oh! I thought this was his office?" "Next door." "Pray, sir, can you tell me, has the doctor many patients?" "Not living." The old gentleman told the story in the vicinity, and the doctor threatened the lawyer with an action for libel.

A CALCULATING MAN.

Hiding along with a friend the other day, a few miles from the city, we came suddenly upon a farmhouse, with a beautiful flower-garden in front, while standing in the road, apparently awaiting our approach, was an old man of perhaps sixty-five. When we arrived near him he ordered us to stop; which singular request we complied with, wondering in our mind what could be his business with us. Immediately upon bidding us to halt, he turned in another direction, towards a wood nearly a quarter of a mile off, and yelled with all the power of his voice:

"Joshua!"

We turned our eyes in that direction, and beheld in the lot adjoining the wood, a young man, engaged in the rather laborious task of digging potatoes. Upon hearing the sound of the old man's voice, however, he rested on his hoe, and faced us. In a moment more came back the faint cry of

"Halloo!"

The old man, seeing that his son had heard him, again yelled at the top of his venerable lungs:

"Where's the half-bushel?"

Again came back the faint response:

"In the potato bin."

"What did he say?" demanded the old man of us. We repeated the answer. He did not hear us, however, for he said:

"Louder—I'm deaf!"

We now screamed it in his ear, and upon being satisfied, he merely said:

"That's enough; you may go on!"

The truth was now apparent; the old man wishing the half-bushel measure, and being obliged to inquire its locality of his son, it would have been necessary for him to travel to the field, on account of his deafness; the expedient above related saved him that trouble, by furnishing an excellent ear-trumpet.

SINGULAR PHENOMENON.—A bank director has favoured us with the curious information that, on that very Thursday, when the gale was putting such an awful pressure on the Royal Exchange Anemometer, people were running about the adjacent Bank of England, furiously declaring that there was no raising the wind. He says things were at sixes and sevens, but our own bill-broker says sevens and eights. Whichever statement is correct, the fact is full of interest.—*Punch*.

THE OUT-SKIRTS.—In a recent bankruptcy case it transpired that one of the dresses, for which the petitioner, a lady, was indebted to one of her creditors, had in it fifty-two yards of silk. Stringent measures must be adopted to prevent our fair ones from going such lengths—or to speak mile-dilly, such distances—in dress. When the wife's dress covers an amount of space which we rood-ly estimate as deserving a rod for its perch-ase, we may be pretty sure that the husband's waistcoat will sooner or later cover an acre in the region of his heart.—*Fun*.

THE SCENE SHIFTER.—I must tell your readers an amusing story I heard from one of the Lyceum company. You know that when the French stage machinery was first introduced into this theatre, a body of French stage carpenters were engaged to work it. They got drunk the second or third night of *Belshazzar*, made a disturbance, and were discharged en masse; but it may be conceived that during their engagement the relations between them and their English brethren were not the most cordial. My friend observed one of the carpenters the other night, when he

could not get one of the set pieces right, at last, after a considerable expenditure of British profanity, go up to the piece, pat it coaxingly, then look at it fixedly, muttering something. My friend listened, and heard with some surprise, a "C'est ça," followed by an approving "Bon!" French of most palpable British twang. Then, when the scene was settled to his satisfaction, the man added, "Hang these here—French scenes. Blow'd if I can get 'em to work without I talk French to 'em!"

"A GENTLE 'ANSER,' JEW."—We read in an Austrian journal:—"A deputation from the Jews of Presburg was last week received by the Emperor of Austria, to present to his Majesty a couple of geese, as usual at Martinmas from time immemorial." So far the *Vienna Court Journal*. By a private note from a lady of the Court, we hear that the Emperor facetiously remarked that as birds, the presents were welcome, but as likenesses, superfluous, he having already got photographs of his tiresome friends, the Pretenders to Holstein and to Naples.—*Punch*.

THE DOOR LOOKING AFTER THE KEY.—Alexander, fourth earl of Kellie, like most of his compeers of that day, was rather a hard liver. He married Annie, daughter of the third earl of Balcarroll, and in the first confidence of early married life, intrusted to her keeping the key of the wine cellar. Lady Kellie was naturally anxious to put some limit on his lordship's potatoes, so, on the first occasion that he invited some of his boon companions to the castle for a dinner and a drink, she gave out as much wine as she thought good for them, and walked quietly up to Carnabee, with the key of the cellar in her pocket, to take her "four hours" with the minister's wife. She, however, formed a very poor idea of the drinking powers of the party she had left behind; they soon discussed the modicum which she had left out for their consumption, and on his lordship sending for more he learned how matters stood. His measures were soon taken; he had the cellar door forthwith forced from its hinges, and desired the servants to take it to the manse, with his compliments to her ladyship, and if she asked any questions, to say—"that it was the cellar door come to look for the key."—*Conolly's Biographical Sketch of Bishop Low*.

RICH, THOUGH POOR.

RED in the east the morning broke,
And in three chambers three men woke;
One, through curtains wove that night
In the loom of the spider, saw the light
Lighting the rafters black and old,
And sighed for the genii to make them gold.

One, in a chamber high and fair,
With panelled ceilings, enamelled rare,
On the purple canopy of his bed
Saw the light with a sluggard's dread,
And buried his sullen and sickly face
Deep in his pillow fringed with lace.

One, from a low and grassy bed,
With the golden air for a coverlid;
No ornaments had he to wear
But his curling beard and his coal-black hair;
His wealth was his acres, and oxen twain,
And health was his cheerful chamberlain.

Night fell stormy—"Woe is me!"
Sighed so wearily two of the three;
"The corn I planted to-day will sprout,"
Said one, "and the roses be blushing out;"
And his heart with its joyful hope o'erran,
Think you he was the poorest man!

A. C.

GEMS.

A DIFFICULTY.—It is easy to look down on others; to look down on ourselves is the difficulty.

FATE AND NECESSITY.—We cannot conquer fate and necessity, yet we can yield to them in such a manner as to be greater than if we could.

A FOOL'S TONGUE.—The tongue of a fool is the key of his counsel, which, in a wise man, wisdom hath in keeping.

PERSUASION BETTER THAN FORCE.—Deal gently with those who stray. Draw them back by love and persuasion. A kiss is worth a thousand kicks. A kind word is more valuable to the lost man than a mine of gold. Think of this, and be on your guard, ye who would chase to the grave an erring brother. We must consult the gentlest manner and softest seasons of address; our advice must not fall like a violent storm, bearing down and making those to droop whom it is meant to cherish and refresh. It must descend as the dew upon the tender herb, or like melting flakes of snow: the softer it falls the longer it dwells upon and the deeper it sinks into the mind. If there are few who have the humility

to receive advice as they ought, it is often because there are few who have the discretion to convey it in the proper way, and who can qualify the harshness and bitterness of reproof, against which human nature is apt to revolt. To probe the wound to the bottom, with all the boldness and resolution of a good spiritual surgeon, and yet with all the delicacy and tenderness of a friend, requires a very dexterous and masterly hand. An affable deportment and complacency of behaviour will disarm the most obstinate; whereas, if, instead of calmly pointing out their mistakes, we break out into unseemly sallies of passion, we cease to have any influence.

PLEASE YOURSELF.—He who pleases himself, without injuring his neighbour, is quite as likely to please half the world as he who vainly tries to please the world.

FAME AND MERIT.—When fame is regarded as the end, and merit as only the means, men are apt to dispense with the latter, if the former can be had without it.

USE OF MODERATE TROUBLES.—Men's happiness springs mainly from moderate troubles, which afford the mind a healthful stimulus, and are followed by a reaction which produces a cheerful flow of spirits.

MISCELLANEOUS.

MAJOR YELVERTON.—It is said that Major Yelverton has taken up his residence in Melbourne.

MISTLETOE ON THE GOOSEBERRY.—In a garden near Maidstone, Kent, mistletoe is now growing on a gooseberry bush, which is very old, and of large size. The mistletoe is very strong.

SCOTLAND GOING SOUTH.—Decidedly Scotland is going South bodily, as we hear that strawberries are in bloom at Huntly, and the cuckoo was heard on Saturday last at the foot of the Clasmach.

FEDERAL IRISHMEN.—Two affidavits have been published, in which the deponents state that, while the Federal war-steamer was lying at Cork last month, a number of Irishmen were enlisted for service in the ship.

SOMETHING UNUSUAL.—Two literary men have lately died leaving large fortunes. The personal property of Mr. William Tooke was sworn under £140,000, and that of Mr. John Bower Nichols under £160,000.

LORD WODEHOUSE.—Lord Wodehouse is about to proceed to Copenhagen, to congratulate King Christian IX. on his accession to the throne. He will be furnished with instructions from the British Government relating to the affairs of the Danish monarchy at the present time.

CONTINENTAL STAMPS.—Most of the continental postage-stamps, which were formerly illustrated with the likenesses of the rulers, have now the arms of the countries substituted instead of the heads, which are no longer of any value.

CHRISTMAS DAY, 1816.—The Lord Mayor of London received a letter from a magistrate in part of Scotland which cost 15s., but containing no other intelligence than that the strictest search had been made after a man who did not prove to be "Watson."

ABBAY CHURCH, BATH.—It is proposed to commence the restoration of the Abbey Church at Bath, known as "The Lantern of England," at a cost of between £6,000 and £7,000, under the superintendence of Mr. Gilbert Scott as architect, and a local committee has been formed in furtherance of the object.

SIR GEORGE CLERK.—It is stated that Sir George Clerk will be appointed to the seat in the Indian Council, vacated by the appointment of Sir John Lawrence, to the Viceroyalty of India. Sir George Clerk, it will be remembered, has been twice Governor of Bombay, and is one of the most distinguished civil servants of the Indian service.

THE EARL OF ZETLAND ON THE VOLUNTEERS AND THE STATE OF EUROPE.—About 200 members of the North Riding Volunteer Corps were entertained at dinner at Richmond, a few days ago. The Earl of Zetland, in returning thanks for the toast of the Lord Lieutenant of the county, said that if ever there was a time when the volunteer movement was likely to be useful, it was now; for, in his experience—the experience of a long life—he had never known Europe in so threatening a condition as at present. He would say to the volunteers that their services were more than ever essential and necessary to the safety and well-being of the country; and on that account he would ask them to drill, and make themselves competent to defend, in the best manner, their Queen and country. That he took the greatest interest in this movement, they would know from the fact that he belonged to certainly not less than ten corps.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Poetry's Ladies' Fashionable Repository for 1864. London: Suttaby and Co. and Peacock and Mansfield.—This "Repository" is a perfect gem of its kind. It is beautifully illustrated with a frontispiece representing the colleges now in course of erection at Framingham, which, when completed, is to be the County of Suffolk Memorial of the lamented Prince Consort, "Albert the Good." The other illustrations consist of Dedham Church, Wharfedale Park, Holkham Hall, Barton Hall, and a view of the Ipswich Arboretum. These are all admirably executed, and, in the highest degree attractive. The literature comprises "The Letter Box," a tale by Mrs. Bird; "A Romance of the City," being a prize prose tale by R. A. Jourdan, and a large quantity of good original poetry. In this portion of the "Repository" we find several pieces appropriate to the season, such as "Old Father Christmas," by Mrs. C. A. Double, and "Lines," by Moss Rosebud. The other effusions are of considerable merit, among which we may mention the prize poem, entitled "The Aolian Harp," "Wild Flowers," "There is Music Everywhere," "The Three Levers," "Good Temper," "A February Morning's Walk," and "Firelight Fancies." With these, and a number of poetical enigmas, and an almanack for 1864, we have one of the most unique "Repositories" of the season, and well deserving of commendation.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ERRATUM.—In answer to MAD-CAP GIRL in No. 31, "village of Vandoles" should be "valleys of Vandoles."

W. S. H. would wish to hear again from EMMA W.

X. Y. Z.—The value of a shekel was about two shillings.

FIXIDA.—Your lines are very good, and evince the poetic faculty.

RANG-A-TANG.—Your writing is quite good enough for the office of an entering clerk.

LA DANES.—Inquire at any music-seller's for Boosey's Dance Music.

CONSTANT READER.—Neither philosophy nor criticism can be accurate where there is no knowledge of archaeology.

ALICE.—Rub with cold water and a coarse towel as often as you can, and they will gradually disappear.

B. C.—Common gutta serena resists cold, water, damp, and also the various influences which excite fermentation.

A. DEKRA.—The vegetable lamp-black, sold in tins, takes by far the most varnish, and answers for making the best ink.

W. G. would be happy to correspond with EUGENIE, and also to exchange *cartes-de-visite*. He does not attempt to describe himself, as the *carte-de-visite* will do it for him.

MARY.—I. Hovenend and Sons are the largest human hair manufacturers in the United Kingdom. 2. We are not certain: but expensive—perhaps from £2 to £5.

A. D. D.—*Liquid muriatic acid*, in combination with nitric acid, is the *acqua regia* of the alchemists, and was so called from its property of dissolving gold.

JUVENILE.—The *hides* of Scripture is what we call cassia, from which was extracted the holy anointing oil. The *sewa* of the chemist is an Egyptian species. Ours is an American plant.

MARY ROGERS.—As a substitute for horsehair upholstery sometimes make use of New Orleans moss for stuffing. The shroub husk of the Indian corn is also used, but this is more brittle than the moss.

EDWARD FRITH.—We believe it is Ruskin who considers Gainsborough the greatest colourist since the time of Rubens, and, in his estimation, the last of what he calls, the "legitimate colourists."

R. T.—The Russian military penal code, according to which those accused of civil offences are tried, has never been published in the kingdom of Poland, and has therefore no lawful force in that country.

D. INGLE.—Without the skill and labour of the mechanic, society, as at present constituted, could not exist. Warriors, or destructive heroes, no doubt, deserve their fame; but mechanics, or constructive ones, ought not to be forgotten.

RICHARD LEWIS.—Your lines are under consideration. Every bookseller who sells THE LONDON READER ought to have the Index. The story of which you speak will receive our earliest attention.

E. C. S. would be very much pleased to correspond with EMMA W. He is about the same height and about the same complexion, and is "considered rather a fine young man, and, above all, very loving and affectionate."

J. C.—We cannot tell you where to purchase a cheap "set of musical glasses;" but if we understand your meaning correctly, do not think the price which the dealer asked for a good and complete set was at all excessive.

E. M. A.—Your hair is not an auburn, but a beautiful brown, fine and silk-like. Its beauty ought to have got you a husband long ago, and we shall do all we can to help you to one. For your sake we will preserve the specimen sent us.

JOHN MARKS.—The word church, in its proper sense, does not apply to the building; but to the people who congregate within the building. Thus we speak of the Christian Church, thereby meaning all Protestant Christians, in a collective sense.

LEGATIE.—No; the title to land is itself a science; and conveying is distinct and most respectable department of the legal profession. Its practitioners keep aloof from petty litigation, and beg their clients not to consult them on matters of common law.

G. F.—There is scarcely any truth which does not admit of being wrested to purposes of evil, and we must not deny the desirableness of originality, because men may err in seeking for it, or because a pretence to it may be made, by presumption, a cloak for its incompetence.

HENRY.—It is much more difficult than you seem to suppose. Language thrown into the continually-recurring clink of rhyme is much oftener prose than poetry. There is mostly no imagination in it whatever. A powerfully-imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant, not only two,

but all the important ideas of its poem or picture, and while it works with any one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relations to it, never losing sight of their bearings on each other. The possession of the faculty in a high degree, seems to justify the expression that man is made after the image of God.

NOTICE.—The expression "cupful," cited from our columns, is perfectly correct, and "cupful" would be incorrect. The plural reference is to the number of times a cup is filled, and not to a plural number of cups, there being only one intended.

HARRY. In answer to EMMA W., begs to offer himself as a candidate for her kind consideration. He is twenty years of age, 5 ft. 8 in. in height, and is possessed of a good figure, and HARRY wishes for EMMA's *carte-de-visite*, as a preliminary, we presume, to obtaining her hand.

A. M.—A person of the name of Andrew Yarranton, a Worcester ironmaster, was the introducer into England of the manufacture of tin-plate. Rich tin mines existed in this country, but owing to the imperfect condition of mechanical art amongst our forefathers, the manufactured article was obtained from foreigners.

ELLA writes to H. GRAHAM, and is considered good-looking; is not very tall, with blue eyes, brown hair, and is possessed of a good temper. She is perfectly conversant with all domestic affairs, and last, though not least, has a sufficient income to keep her. With these recommendations, she thinks she deserves a comfortable home, and some one to love her.

HARRY C. writes—"Having seen the advertisement of EMMA W. in your most valuable columns, I beg to offer myself as a candidate for her hand. I am nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, have blue eyes and dark auburn hair, have received a good education, and am considered handsome; but

Oh! what's a table, richly spread,
Without a woman at its head?
Your writing is excellent.

ANNE, whose age is twenty, with dark hair and eyes, height 5 ft., writes from Wylke to intimate that she wishes to correspond with a special correspondent. "I have no time to write," she says, "but I have a true and loving heart to a quiet, steady young man." We think ANNE's offer ought to be accepted by some one.

DELTA.—1. Wash with Hovenend and Sons' glycerine soap and warm water. 2. Some of our correspondents write to know what will quicken their appetites, and we tell them to take more open-air cheerful exercise; but as you write to know what will lessen yours, we must advise you to encourage the feeling of hunger as little as you can.

G. H. A. is very much in want of a pretty little wife; is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, with brown curly hair, blue eyes, and very good-looking. He is a gentleman by birth and education, and has travelled a good deal. His fortune is at present small, but it is likely soon to be increased. He would like his wife to have money.

G. E. G., in answer to EUGENIE, begs to state that he is twenty-one, of good family, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, dark hair and whiskers, and generally considered good-looking; has a private income of £200 a year, and if this suits the taste of EUGENIE, he will be happy to hear from her again through THE LONDON READER.

J. B. and J. W.—We do not think your question at all absurd, and will answer it. There is a tradition that James I., in one of his journeys in Lancashire, whilst at a banquet in Houghton Tower, near Blackburn, gave the knightly designation to the noble joint that has ever since been known as the air-loin. The same tradition is also related as a waggish freak of Charles II., whence the epigram:

Our Second Charles, of fame facetious,
On loin of beef did dine;
He held his sword pleased o'er the meat—
Rise up, thou famed Sir Loir!

The table upon which this burlesque ceremony was said to have occurred was shown a few years since at Friday-hill House, at Chingford, in Essex. But there is little doubt that the word has been formed from the French *ser*, upon, and the English *lois*, our own particles not readily bearing to be used as compounds. The joint so-called, it will be observed, is cut from the loin and behind the small ribs of the animal, whence, doubtless, its designation—*ser* (or *sir*) *loir*.

J. K. is in want of a young domesticated wife, and is 5 ft. 10 in., with jet black hair, a military appearance, and will be happy to exchange *cartes-de-visite* with any young lady about his own age. Money is no object, but good temper and domesticated habits indispensable. His own age is twenty-two, and present income £110, with an annuity on the death of an aged aunt of £60.

ZERO.—The Act of Parliament prohibiting the use of dogs in drawing carts, &c., within the metropolitan police district is the 2nd and 3rd Victoria, cap. 47, and the 56th section provides for this act coming into operation on the 1st of January, 1840; after which date the penalty for using dogs as above would be 40s. for the first offence, and £5 for any subsequent offence. For reply to your other question, see answer to *SKEP*.

SKEP.—The following will be found a very good black or brown dye for the hair:—Take equal parts of linseed and lime: mix well, and form into a paste, with water, if a black is desired; with milk if brown. Clean and wash the hair with soda-and-water, to free it from grease; then lay on the paste pretty thick; cover the head with oilskin or something similar, and then go to bed. In the morning the powder should be brushed out carefully, and the hair oiled.

K. U. H. BAUCK.—This correspondent writes from Hull to us in Danish; but as not many of our lady readers (for whose benefit his letter is intended), are likely to be acquainted with that language, we translate the substance of his communication. He is twenty-one years of age, has fair hair, blue eyes, and is 6 ft. in height; but does not vouchsafe further particulars. What do our lady readers think of this blue-eyed and fair-haired son of the North?

W. W. R.—It is always advisable, though not essential, that articles of co-partnership should be formally drawn up, and that they should specify the commencement and intended duration of the partnership; the kind of business to be pursued; the proportion of capital to be brought in; the manner in which the gains and losses are to be divided; whether interest is to be charged on capital, and at what rate; the

allowance which the co-partners may withdraw yearly for their private use, and the disposition which is to be made of the joint property, in the event of a dissolution. There should also be inserted in all co-partnership agreements an article against the co-partners becoming bound as surety or otherwise during the co-partnership, except for the business of the firm. A violation of this stipulation gives the right to dissolve the co-partnership.

ALICE.—The Leicester fairs, "for the purchase and sale of cattle," are, by the Local Act of Parliament 9th Victoria cap. xxix, sec. 53, stated to be held on 2nd of March, 12th of May, 5th of July, 10th of October, and the 5th of December. The number of days which the fairs are to last, is not specified in the Act; but is probably regulated by some bye-law of council of the borough; and as they are chartered fairs, you can no doubt obtain all information regarding them from the clerk to the borough council.

TO THE EDITOR.—Sir,—I have recently been introduced to a young gentleman, with whom I have fallen most desperately in love, and I have every reason to believe that my passion is returned; but being rather shy, I do not think he will have the courage to propose, and as he is going away after Christmas, I am undetermined as to what course to pursue, therefore I solicit your advice.—VENUSIA READ. (Get some elderly lady to inform him of your affections, and seeing that you are both alike deep in love, proposals will naturally follow. Your writing is very good.)

ALFRED WILD.—Being eighteen years of age and presuming that you understand your father's business, we should advise you to adopt it and try and do something for yourself. We would not advise you to pursue the calligrapher's art as a means of livelihood, as it will take a long time before you receive an adequate competency for your respectable support. We heartily sympathize with your situation, but a little energy, patience, and the making of your position known among your friends, will soon bring you support and enable you to begin the more important duties of life for yourself. Be steady, obliging, prudent, and active.

G. W.—To many persons the cultivation of the mistletoe is looked upon with as much doubt as we are told the ancient Romans looked upon the cultivation of mushrooms. It may, however, be very readily cultivated by attending to the following directions:—Make an incision in the bark of an apple-tree (many other trees, as the pear, oak, whitethorn, and even laurels, will answer equally well), and into this incision, in the spring of the year, insert some well-ripened berries of the mistletoe, carefully tying the bark over with a piece of bass, mat, or woollen yarn. This experiment often fails, from the birds running away with the berries from the place where they have been inserted, for they are very fond of them. To prevent this, the incision in the bark should be made on the underside of a hanging branch, where birds are not likely to rest.

TO THE EDITOR.—Sir,—I am a Doctor of Medicine, and as I see through the medium of your widely circulated publication so many applications from fair ladies for gentlemen correspondents, I am induced to hope I may be successful in meeting some bright creature whom I could guard as the apple of mine eye, and making no stipulation as regards wealth or beauty, provided she bring a fair share of common sense and amiability of disposition to me, after her a cherished wife, friend, and companion in the struggle for the remainder of the allotted three score and ten. I have travelled for the past nine years in the East and West Indies, the Colonies, Persia, Syria, and Egypt; have seen at midnight the fire-fly flashing in the dark jungle—heard at day-break the mutterings of the Moslem at his prayer, and gazed at noon on the works of Raphael in the Palace of Versailles.—BACCHUS A BOY.

TO MISS ANNE H.—My dear madam,—Having observed your appeal in THE LONDON READER, and being very much struck therewith, I am induced to offer a description of myself for you, I trust, favourable consideration. I am twenty-four years of age, dark in complexion, black hair, am 5 ft. 10 in. high, whether good-looking or not, I leave to yourself to say, should I be so fortunate as to have the most desirable pleasure of meeting you. I have an income of £250 per annum, derived from freehold property in London, and expectation of a very considerable increase in amount on the death of a very aged relative. Should you think the particulars I have given sufficient to form a basis for future correspondence, I should be glad if you sent an answer to me, enclosing either your *carte de visite* (of which no improper use will be made) and I would in return send my own.—EDWARD WOODS.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—HELEN WILSON, who wishes to correspond with H. GRAHAM—ADA, who would be pleased to correspond with G. L. P.—QUITS MATTER OF FACT wants a lover; hand-writing very fair; is good-looking, inclined to melancholy, and expects money.—W. F. J., and A. W. T. are both in the same mercantile house, and in want of lovers. The first is in receipt of £100; and the second of £120 per annum. Neither of them, according to themselves, would seem to be ill-looking.—M. S., who wishes to correspond with G. L. P.—A KENTISH MAID feebly deprecates the want of a lover, and the great regret evinced by the "men of Kent" towards the ladies in the place she resides. She is the daughter of a farmer, and possesses many advantages. EDWARD C. has just returned from abroad; is well connected, and has good expectations. He desires to attract the notice of EMMA W., and will be glad to hear more of her.—MERCATOR—DUNCAN GREY—JUPITER ANDROM—LOVE'S YOUNG DEKRA—DEERSTALKER—MARY GRAHAM—DUNCAN—DUNCAN—TAS—FAMOUS—ROUGH AND READY—JENNY LAWSON—OYELLIA—LINKS OF A DEAD MOUSE—A BACHELOR—GUILLERME DE BOUQUON, "The Blind Father's Request."

*** NOW READY, VOL. I. OF THE LONDON READER. PRICE 4s. 6d.

ALSO, THE TITLE AND INDEX TO VOL. I. PRICE ONE PENNY.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER."

†† We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

London: Printed and Published for the Proprietor, at 231, Strand, by J. E. GELDER.

A REAL SEA BATH IN YOUR OWN ROOM

BY USING

TIDMAN'S SEA SALT.

An efficient substitute for sea bathing is now placed within the reach of all, without the expense and inconvenience of a visit to the coast. The benefits derived from a course of sea bathing are too well known to call for remark. It is invigorating alike to old and young, feeble and robust. For children of a weakly habit it is the most effectual strengthener that can be recommended.

The Proprietors call attention to the fact that "TIDMAN'S SEA SALT" is not manufactured in imitation of sea water, but is ACTUALLY EXTRACTED FROM THE SEA, at one of the most salubrious watering places in the south of Europe, by a process which preserves intact all those saline properties that render Sea Bathing so efficacious in maintaining and restoring health.

Strongly recommended by the leading Medical Men and Chemists, including Dr. HASSALL and W. L. SCOTT, Esq., who have analysed and reported upon this salt in the most favourable terms.

Sold everywhere by Chemists and Grocers, in bags containing 7 lb., 14 lb., 28 lb., and upwards; or a bag will be sent direct by the Proprietors on receipt of Post-Office Order or Stamps at the following prices:—28 lb., 4s.; 56 lb., 8s.; 112 lb., 16s.

Sole Proprietors,
TIDMAN AND SON, CHEMISTS,
 10, WORMWOOD STREET, BISHOPSGATE, LONDON, E.C.

NAPOLEON PRICE'S GOLDEN OIL for restoring the hair. The fact of its being in constant use in the Royal Nursery and in the families of the nobility stamps its superior excellence.—3s. 6d., 5s., 7s., and 10s. per bottle. Manufactory, 158, New Bond Street.

WEDDING and BIRTHDAY PRESENTS.—Dressing Cases, Travelling Dressing Bags, Despatch Boxes, Writing Cases, Jewel Cases, Mounted and Ornate Suites for the Writing Table, Photographic Albums, and a choice variety of Useful Elegancies, suitable for Presents, at RODRIGUES', 42, Piccadilly, W.

WITH HARPER TWELVETREES' UNIVERSAL CLOTHES WRINGER (Ive's patent). Lace curtains can be "done up" beautifully. No twisting and tearing, and no mending required. Price 50s., with cog-wheels. Carriage free from the manufactory, Bromley-by-Bow, London, E. Active canvassers wanted in every town.

KINAHAN'S LL WHISKY V. COGNAC BRANDY.—This celebrated old Irish Whisky rivals the finest French Brandy. It is pure, mild, mellow, delicious, and very wholesome. Sold in bottles, 3s. 8d., at the retail houses in London; by the agents in the principal towns in England; or wholesale at 8, Great Windmill Street, Haymarket.—Observe the red seal, pink label, and cork branded "Kinahan's LL Whisky."

GLENFIELD PATENT STARCH.—Messrs. Wetherpoon and Co. have been appointed Starch Purveyors to Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales. The starch is used in the Royal laundry, and was awarded the Prize medal, being a confirmation, by some of the most eminent scientific men of the age, of the superior qualities of this world-renowned starch. Sold in packets at 1d., 1d., 2d., 4d., and 8d. each, by all respectable grocers, chandlers, oilmen, &c.—Wetherpoon and Co., Glasgow and London.

ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL.—This elegant and fragrant oil is universally in high repute for its unparalleled success in promoting the growth, restoring, and beautifying the Human Hair. Its invaluable properties have obtained the patronage of royalty and the aristocracy throughout Europe, and its introduction into the nursery of royalty. Price 3s. 6d., 7s., 10s. 6d. (equal to four small), and 21s. per bottle. Sold by chemists and perfumers.—Ask for "Rowland's MACASSAR OIL."

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.—The causes of dysentery in hot climates and diarrhoea in our own country may be safely counteracted by the purifying agency of these well-known pills. Within these few years the chance of escape from a dangerous disease was only by taking dangerous remedies; now the malady is dispelled by general purification of the blood, and its regenerating influence over every organ. Thus the very means for overcoming the sighing, vomiting, cramps, and straining include the elements of new strength. Holloway's Pills are admirable tonics and astringents, and can be confidently relied upon. Whatever may have immediately given rise to the irritation of the bowels, these pills soothe the irritated membranes and repress the excessive excitability of the intestines.

SPANISH FLY is the acting ingredient in ALEX. ROSS'S CANTHARIDES OIL, which produces whiskers and thickens hair. Sold at 3s. 6d., 5s. 6d., and 10s. 6d.; or per post, 54, 84, or 144 stamps.—A. Ross, 248, High Holborn.

GREY HAIR.—248, High Holborn, London.—ALEX. ROSS'S charges for dyeing the hair—Ladies', from 7s. 6d.; gentlemen's, from 5s. The dye is sold at 3s. 6d., and sent by post for 54 stamps. Any shade produced.

ALEX. ROSS'S DESTROYER OF HAIR removes superfluous hair from the face without the slightest effect to the skin, 3s. 6d., or per post for 54 stamps. ROSS'S TOILET MAGAZINE, 1d. monthly; had of all booksellers; or for two stamps.—248, High Holborn, London.

TWO THOUSAND best SILVER WATCHES, 25s. each; 500 gold ditto, 55s. each, all warranted; 1,000 Solid Gold Guard Chains and Albert Chains, 16s. 6d. each; Gold Gem Rings and Signet ditto, 4s. each; 1,500 Solid Gold Scarf Pins, 5s. 6d. each; Gold Brooches, Earrings, Studs, and every kind of Jewellery, at a similar reduction. Country orders, per remittances, carefully attended to.—George Dyer, 90, Regent Street, London.

DENT, CHRONOMETER, WATCH, and CLOCK MAKER. by Special Appointment, to her Majesty the Queen and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and Maker of the Great Clock for the Houses of Parliament, invites attention to the superior workmanship and elegance of design of his extensive stock of watches and drawing-room clocks.

Guis.	Guis.
Ladies' gold foreign watches 8	Strong silver lever watches 5
Gentlemen's do. do. 10	Gentlemen's gold compensation balance ditto . 40
Ladies' or Gentlemen's gold English lever do. . . 18	Silver do. do. . . 25
Marine Chronometers, 35 guineas.	

Gold and silver pocket chronometers, astronomical, turret, and bracket clocks of every description. An elegant assortment of London-made fine gold Albert and guard chains, &c.

DENT, 61, Strand (adjoining Court's Bank); 34 and 35, Royal Exchange; and at the Clock and Marine Compass Factory, Somerset Wharf, Strand, London.

TEA AT WHOLESALE PRICES.—Six Pounds for Nine Shillings. All teas are lower at this day's public sale. THE CHINESE and EAST INDIAN TEA COMPANY hasten to give the public the benefit of it by reducing their prices 3d. per lb.

PRICE LIST THIS DAY.

1. Lowest quality dusty leaf	1s. 6d. per lb.
2. Better quality, little broken	1s. 9d. "
3. Fair sound tea	2s. 0d. "
4. Good strong tea	2s. 3d. "
5. Stout heavy tea	2s. 6d. "
6. Superior tea	2s. 9d. "
7. Excellent tea	3s. 0d. "
8. Fine tea	3s. 3d. "
9. Extra fine tea	3s. 6d. "
10. Very choice tea	3s. 9d. "

THE CHINESE and EAST INDIAN TEA COMPANY, 3, Mincing Lane, E.C.

DENT'S CHRONOMETERS, WATCHES, and CLOCKS.—M. F. DENT, 33, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, Watch, Clock, and Chronometer Maker, by special appointment to her Majesty the Queen.—33, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, corner of Spring Gardens, London.

FAMILY JARS, for securely Storing and Preserving Fruit, Jams, Pickles, Potted Meats, Butter, &c. The cheapest and best air-tight Jar is that which is hermetically sealed by Jennings's Patent Capsule, simple, cheap, and durable.—Descriptive illustrations, prices &c., from the wholesale depot, Palace-road, Lambeth, S. Retail from all china and glass dealers, general ironmongers, &c.

W. F. THOMAS and CO.'S PATENT SEWING MACHINES.—PRIZE MEDAL.—Constructed on principles which the experience of fifteen years has proved to be sound, and improved by recent modifications, these machines maintain the high reputation which they acquired on their first introduction. The work produced (alike on both sides) is unequalled for strength, beauty, regularity, and durability. Stitching by machine for the trade or private families.—66, Newgate Street, and Regent Circus, Oxford Street, London, W.

GENTLEMEN WHO DON'T RUN TAILORS' BILLS will find the Economy of Cash Payments by giving their orders to B. BENJAMIN, Merchant Tailor, 74, Regent Street, W. The 47s. Scotch Tweed and Angola Suits; the 14s. and 16s. ditto Trowsers, the Two Guinea Dress and Frock Coats; the Guinea Dress Trowsers; the Half-guinea Waistcoats. N.B.—A perfect fit guaranteed.

JOSEPH GILLOTT respectfully invites the attention of the public to the following numbers of the PATENT METALLIC PENS, which, for quality of material, easy action, and great durability, will ensure universal preference.

FOR LADIES' USE.—For fine neat writing, especially on thick and highly-finished papers, Nos. 1, 173, 303, 604. In extra-fine points.

FOR GENERAL USE.—Nos. 2, 164, 166, 168, 604. In fine points.

FOR BOLD FREE WRITING.—Nos. 3, 164, 166, 168, 604. In medium points.

FOR GENTLEMEN'S USE.—For large, free, bold writing. The Black Swan Quill, large barrel pen.—No. 808. The Patent Magnum Bonum. No. 263. In medium and broad points.

FOR GENERAL WRITING.—No. 263. In extra-fine and fine points. No. 810. New Bank Pen. No. 262. In fine points. Small barrel. No. 840. The Autograph Pen.

FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.—The celebrated three-hole Correspondence Pen, No. 382. The ditto four-hole ditto, No. 202. The Public Pen, No. 292. Ditto, with bead, No. 404. Small Barrel Pens, fine and free, Nos. 392, 405, 603.

To be had of every respectable stationer in the world. Wholesale and for exportation at the manufactory, Victoria Works, Graham Street; and at 96, New Street, Birmingham; 91, John Street, New York; and of WILLIAM DAVIS, at the London Depot, 87, Gracechurch Street, E.C.

BOOKS RECEIVED.

Poetry's Ladies' Fashionable Repository for 1864. London: Suttaby and Co. and Peacock and Mansfield.—This "Repository" is a perfect gem of its kind. It is beautifully illustrated with a frontispiece representing the college now in course of erection at Framlingham, which, when completed, is to be the County of Suffolk Memorial of the lamented Prince Consort, "Albert the Good." The other illustrations consist of Dedham Church, Wierstead Park, Holkham Hall, Barton Hall, and a view of the Ipswich Arboretum. These are all admirably executed, and in the highest degree attractive. The literature comprises "The Letter Box," a tale by Mrs. Bird; "A Romance of the City," being a prize prose tale by B. A. Jourdan, and a large quantity of good original poetry. In this portion of the "Repository" we find several pieces appropriate to the season, such as "Old Father Christmas," by Mrs. G. A. Double, and "Lines," by Moss Rosebud. The other effusions are of considerable merit, amongst which we may mention the prize poem, entitled "The Zolian Harp," "Wild Flowers," "There is Music Everywhere," "The Three Levers," "Good Temper," "A February Morning's Walk," and "Firelight Fancies." With these, and a number of poetical enigmas, and an almanack for 1864, we have one of the most unique "Repositories" of the season, and well deserving of commendation.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

ERRATUM.—In answer to MAD-CAP GIRL, in No. 31, "village of Vaudois" should be "valleys of Vaudois."

W. S. H.—Would wish to hear again from EMMA W. X. Y. Z.—The value of a shekel was about two shillings.

FELDA.—Your lines are very good, and evince the poetic faculty.

RANG-A-TANG.—Your writing is quite good enough for the office of an entering clerk.

LA DANSE.—Inquire at any music-seller's for Boosey's Dance Music.

CONSTANT READER.—Neither philosophy nor criticism can be accurate where there is no knowledge of archaeology.

ALICE.—Rub with cold water and a coarse towel as often as you can, and they will gradually disappear.

B. C.—Common gutta percha resists cold, water, damp, and also the various influences which excite fermentation.

A. DEKER.—The vegetable lamp-black, sold in tins, taken by far the most varnish, and answers for making the best ink.

W. G.—Would be happy to correspond with EUGENIE, and also to exchange *carte-de-visites*. He does not attempt to describe himself, as the *carte-de-visite* will do it for him.

MARY.—I. Hovenend and Sons are the largest human hair manufacturers in the United Kingdom. 2. We are not certain; but expensive—perhaps from £2 to £3.

A. D. D.—Liquid muriatic acid, in combination with nitric acid, is the *agua regia* of the alchemists, and was so called from its property of dissolving gold.

JUVENILE.—The *kidda* of Scripture is what we call cassia, from which was extracted the holy anointing oil. The *sema* of the chemists is an Egyptian species. Ours is an American plant.

MARY ROGERS.—As a substitute for horsehair upholsterysters sometimes make use of New Orleans moss for stuffing. The fibrous husk of the Indian corn is also used, but this is more brittle than the moss.

EDWARD FRITH.—We believe it is Ruskin who considers Gainsborough the greatest colourist since the time of Rubens, and, in his estimation, the last of what he calls, the "legitimate colourists."

R. T.—The Russian military penal code, according to which those accused of civil offences are tried, has never been published in the kingdom of Poland, and has therefore no lawful force in that country.

D. INGLIS.—Without the skill and labour of the mechanic, society, as at present constituted, could not exist. Warriors, or destructive heroes, no doubt, deserve their fame; but mechanics, or constructive ones, ought not to be forgotten.

RICHARD LEWIS.—Your lines are under consideration. Every bookseller who sells THE LONDON READER ought to have the INDEX. The story of which you speak will receive our earliest attention.

E. C. S.—Would be very much pleased to correspond with EMMA W. He is about the same height and about the same complexion, and is "considered rather a fine young man, and, above all, very loving and affectionate."

J. C.—We cannot tell you where to purchase a cheap "set of musical glasses;" but if we understand your meaning correctly, do not think the price which the dealer asked for a good and complete set was at all excessive.

E. M. A.—Your hair is not an auburn, but a beautiful brown, fine and silk-like. Its beauty ought to have got you a husband long ago, and we shall do all we can to help you to one. For your sake we will preserve the specimen sent us.

JOHN MAKES.—The word *church*, in its proper sense, does not apply to the building; but to the people who congregate within the building. Thus we speak of the Christian Church, thereby meaning all Protestant Christians, in a collective sense.

LEGATE.—No; the title to land is itself a science; and conveyancing is a distinct and most respectable department of the legal profession. Its practitioners keep aloof from petty litigation, and beg their clients not to consult them on matters of common law.

G. F.—There is scarcely any truth which does not admit of being wrested to purposes of evil, and we must not deny the desirableness of originality, because men may err in seeking for it, or because a pretence to it may be made, by presumption, a cloak for its incompetence.

HENRY.—It is much more difficult than you seem to suppose. Language thrown into the continually-recurring clink of rhyme is much often prose than poetry. There is mostly no imagination in it whatever. A powerfully-imaginative mind seizes and combines at the same instant, not only two,

but all the important ideas of its poem or picture, and while it works with any one of them, it is at the same instant working with and modifying all in their relations to it, never losing sight of their bearings on each other. The possession of the faculty in a high degree, seems to justify the expression that man is made after the image of God.

NATURALIS.—The expression "cupful," cited from our columns, is perfectly correct, and "cupful" would be incorrect. The plural reference is to the number of times a cup is filled, and not to a plural number of cups, there being only one intended.

HARRY.—In answer to EMMA W., begs to offer himself as a candidate for her kind consideration. He is twenty years of age, 5 ft. 8½ in. in height, and is possessed of a good figure, and HARRY wishes for EMMA's *carte-de-visite*, as a preliminary, we presume, to obtaining her hand.

A. M.—A person of the name of Andrew Yarranton, a Worcester ironmaster, was the introducer into England of the manufacture of tin-plate. Rich tin mines existed in this country, but owing to the imperfect condition of mechanical art amongst our forefathers, the manufactured article was obtained from foreigners.

ELLA writes to H. GRAHAM, and is considered good-looking; is not very tall, with blue eyes, brown hair, and is possessed of a good temper. She is perfectly conversant with all domestic affairs, and last, though not least, has a sufficient income to keep her. With these recommendations, she thinks she deserves a comfortable home, and some one to love her.

HARRY C. writes:—"Having seen the advertisement of EMMA W. in your most valuable column, I beg to offer myself as a candidate for her hand. I am nineteen years of age, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, have blue eyes and dark auburn hair, have received a good education, and am considered handsome; but

Oh! what's a table, richly spread,
Without a woman at its head?

Your writing is excellent.

ANNE, whose age is twenty, with dark hair and eyes, height 5 ft., writes from Wyke to intimate that she wishes to correspond with a respectable mechanic. "I have no fortune," adds ANNE, "but a true and loving heart to offer to a quiet, steady young man." We think ANNE's offer ought to be accepted by some one.

DELTA.—I. Wash with Hovenend and Sons' glycerine soap and warm water. 2. Some of our correspondents write to know what will quicken their appetites, and we tell them to take more open-air cheerful exercise; but as you write to know what will lessen yours, we must advise you to encourage the feeling of hunger as little as you can.

C. H. A. is very much in want of a pretty little wife; is twenty-two years of age, 5 ft. 9 in. in height, with brown curly hair, blue eyes, and very good-looking. He is a gentleman by birth and education, and has travelled a good deal. His fortune is at present small, but it is likely soon to be increased. He would like his wife to have money.

G. E. G., in answer to EUGENIE, begs to state that he is twenty-one, of good family, 5 ft. 10 in. in height, dark hair and whiskers, and generally considered good-looking; has a private income of £200 a year, and if this suits the taste of EUGENIE, he will be happy to hear from her again through THE LONDON READER.

J. R. and J. W.—We do not think your question at all absurd, and will answer it. There is a tradition that James I. in one of his journeys in Lancashire, whilst at a banquet in Houghton Tower, near Blackburn, gave the knighthood designation to the noble joint that has since been known as the sir-loin. The same tradition is also related as a wagtail-freak of Charles II., whence the epigram:

Our Second Charles, of fame facete,
On loins of beef did dine;

He held his sword pleased o'er the meat,—
Kiss up, thou famed Sir Loins!

The table upon which this burlesque ceremony was said to have occurred was shown a few years since at Friday-hill House, at Chingford, in Essex. [But there is little doubt that the world has been formed from the French *sir*, upon, and the English *loin*, our own particles, not readily bearing to be used as compounds. The joint so-called, it will be observed, is cut from the loin and behind the small ribs of the animal, whence, doubtless, its designation—*sir* (or *sir*) loin.]

J. K. is in want of a young domesticated wife, and is 5 ft. 10 in., with jet black hair, a military appearance, and will be happy to exchange *carte-de-visites* with any young lady about his own age. Money is no object, but good temper and domesticated habits indispensable. His own age is twenty-two, and present income £110, with an annuity on the death of an aged aunt of £60.

ZERO.—The Act of Parliament prohibiting the use of dogs in drawing carts, &c., within the metropolitan police district is the 2nd and 3rd Victoria, cap. 47, and the 56th section provides for this act coming into operation on the 1st of January, 1840; after which date the penalty for using dogs as above would be 40s. for the first offence, and £3 for any subsequent offence. For reply to your other question, see answer to SPES.

SPES.—The following will be found a very good black or brown dye for the hair:—Take equal parts of litharge and lime; mix well, and form into a paste, with water, if a black is desired; with milk if brown. Clean and wash the hair with soda-water, to free it from grease; then lay on the paste pretty thick; cover the head with oilskin or something similar, and then go to bed. In the morning the powder should be brushed out carefully, and the hair oiled.

K. U. H. BAUCK.—This correspondent writes from Hull to us in Danish; but as not many of our lady readers (for whose benefit his letter is intended), are likely to be acquainted with that language, we translate the substance of his communication. He is twenty-one years of age, has fair hair, blue eyes, and is 6 ft. in height; but does not vouchsafe further particulars. What do our lady readers think of this blue-eyed and fair-haired son of the North.

W. W. B.—It is always advisable, though not essential, that articles of co-partnership should be formally drawn up, and that they should specify the commencement and intended duration of the partnership; the kind of business to be pursued; the proportion of capital to be brought in; the manner in which the gains and losses are to be divided; whether interest is to be charged on capital, and at what rate; the

allowance which the co-partners may withdraw yearly for their private use, and the disposition which is to be made of the joint property, in the event of a dissolution. There should also be inserted in all co-partnership agreements an article against the co-partners becoming bound as surety or otherwise during the co-partnership, except for the business of the firm. A violation of this stipulation gives the right to dissolve the co-partnership.

ALICE.—The Leicester fairs, "for the purchase and sale of cattle," are, by the Local Act of Parliament 9th Victoria, cap. xxix, sec. 53, stated to be held on 2nd of March, 12th of May, 5th of July, 10th of October, and the 8th of December. The number of days which the fairs are to last, is not specified in the Act; but is probably regulated by some by-law of council of the borough; and as they are chartered fairs, you can no doubt obtain all information regarding them from the clerk to the borough council.

TO THE EDITOR.—Sir,—I have recently been introduced to a young gentleman, with whom I have fallen most desperately in love, and I have every reason to believe that my passion is returned; but being rather shy, I do not think I will have the courage to propose, and as he is going away after Christmas, I am undetermined as to what course to pursue, therefore I solicit your advice.—VERONA READ. [Get some elderly lady to inform him of your affections, and seeing that you are both alike deep in love, proposals will naturally follow. Your writing is very good.]

ALFRED WILD.—Being eighteen years of age and presuming that you understand your father's business, we should advise you to adopt it and try and do something for yourself. We would not advise you to pursue the calligrapher's art as a means of livelihood, as it will take a long time before you receive an adequate sufficiency for your respectable support. We heartily sympathise with your situation, but a little energy, patience, and the making of your position known among your friends, will soon bring you support and enable you to begin the more important duties of life for yourself. Be steady, obliging, prudent, and active.

G. W.—To many persons the cultivation of the mistletoe is looked upon with as much doubt as we are told the ancient Romans looked upon the cultivation of mushrooms. It may, however, be very readily cultivated by attending to the following directions:—Make an incision in the bark of an apple-tree (many other trees, as the pear, oak, whitethorn, and even laurels, will answer equally well), and into this incision, in the spring of the year, insert some well-tipped berries of the mistletoe, carefully tying the bark over with a piece of bass, mat, or woollen yarn. This experiment often fails, from the birds running away with the berries from the place where they have been inserted, for they are very fond of them. To prevent this, the incision in the bark should be made on the underside of a hanging branch, where birds are not likely to rest.

TO THE EDITOR.—Sir,—I am a Doctor of Medicine, and as I see through the medium of your widely circulated publication so many applications from fair ladies for gentlemen correspondents, I am induced to hope I may be successful in meeting some bright creature whom I could guard as the apple of mine eye, and making no stipulation as regards wealth or beauty, provided she bring a fair share of common sense and amiability of disposition to render her a cherished wife, friend, and companion in the struggle for the remainder of the allotted three score and ten. I have travelled for the past nine years in the East and West Indies, the Colonies, Persia, Syria, and Egypt; have seen at midnight the fire-fly flashing in the dark jungle—heard at day-break the mutterings of the Moslem at his prayer, and gazed at noon on the works of Raphael in the Palace of the Farnesini.—BROTHER OF A BOY.

TO MISS ANNIE H.—My dear madam,—Having observed your appeal in THE LONDON READER, and being very much struck therewith, I am induced to offer a description of myself for you, I trust, favourable consideration. I am twenty-four years of age, dark in complexion, black hair, am 5 ft. 10 in. high, whether good-looking or not, I leave to yourself to say, should I be so fortunate as to have the most desirable pleasure of meeting you. I have an income of £350 per annum, derived from freehold property in London, and expectations of a very considerable increase in amount, on the death of a very aged uncle. Should you think the particulars I have given sufficient to form a basis for future correspondence, I should be glad if you sent an answer to me, enclosing either your *carte de visite* (of which no improper use will be made) and I would in return send my own.—EDWARD WOODS.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED.—HELEN WILSON, who wishes to correspond with H. GRAHAM.—ADA, who would be pleased to correspond with G. L. P.—QUITE MATTER OF FACT wants a lover; hand-writing very fair; is good-looking, inclined to *embonpoint*, and expects money.—W. F. J., and A. W. E. are both in the same mercantile house, and in want of lovers. The first is in receipt of £100, and the second of £120 per annum. Neither of them, according to themselves, would seem to be ill-looking.—M. S., who wishes to correspond with G. L. P.—A KENTISH MAID feelingly deprecates the want of a lover, and the great neglect evinced by the "men of Kent" towards the ladies in the place she resides. She is the daughter of a farmer, and possesses many advantages. EDWARD C. has just returned from abroad; is well connected, and has good expectations. He desires to attract the notice of EMMA W., and will be glad to hear more of her.—MERCATOR—DUNCAN GREY—JUPITER AMMON—LOVE'S YOUNG DREAM—DEERSTALKER—MARY GRAHAM—DOMINIE DOBBS—HUMANITAS—TEMPLE—ROUGH AND READY—JEMMY DAWSON—OPHELIA—"LINES ON A DEAD MOUSE"—A BACHELOR—GUILLERME DE BOURBON, "The Blind Father's Request."

* * NOW READY, VOL. I. OF THE LONDON READER.

PRICE 4s. 6d.

ALSO, THE TITLE AND INDEX TO VOL. I. PRICE ONE PENNY.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER."

†† We cannot undertake to return B-jected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

London: Printed and Published for the Proprietor, at 331, Strand, by J. E. GELDER.

A REAL SEA BATH IN YOUR OWN ROOM

BY USING

TIDMAN'S SEA SALT.

AN efficient substitute for sea bathing is now placed within the reach of all, without the expense and inconvenience of a visit to the coast. The benefits derived from a course of sea bathing are too well known to call for remark. It is invigorating alike to old and young, feeble and robust. For children of a weakly habit it is the most effectual strengthener that can be recommended.

The Proprietors call attention to the fact that "TIDMAN'S SEA SALT" is not manufactured in imitation of sea water, but is ACTUALLY EXTRACTED FROM THE SEA, at one of the most salubrious watering places in the south of Europe, by a process which preserves intact all those saline properties that render Sea Bathing so efficacious in maintaining and restoring health.

Strongly recommended by the leading Medical Men and Chemists, including Dr. HASSALL and W. L. SCOTT, Esq., who have analysed and reported upon this salt in the most favourable terms.

Sold everywhere by Chemists and Grocers, in bags containing 7 lb., 14 lb., 28 lb., and upwards; or a bag will be sent direct by the Proprietors on receipt of Post-Office Order or Stamps at the following prices:—28 lb., 4s.; 56 lb., 8s.; 112 lb., 16s.

Sole Proprietors,
TIDMAN AND SON, CHEMISTS,
 10, WORMWOOD STREET, BISHOPSGATE, LONDON, E.C.

NAPOLÉON PRICE'S GOLDEN OIL for restoring the hair. The fact of its being in constant use in the Royal Nursery and in the families of the nobility stamps its superior excellence.—3s. 6d., 5s., 7s., and 10s. per bottle. Manufactory, 158, New Bond Street.

WEDDING and BIRTHDAY PRESENTS.—Dressing Cases, Travelling Dressing Bags, Despatch Boxes, Writing Cases, Jewel Cases, Mounted and Ornate Suites for the Writing Table, Photographic Albums, and a choice variety of Useful Elegancies, suitable for Presents, at RODRIGUES', 42, Piccadilly, W.

WITH HARPER TWELVETREES' UNIVERSAL CLOTHES WRINGER (Ive's patent). Lace curtains can be "done up" beautifully. No twisting and tearing, and no mending required. Price 30s., with cog-wheels. Carriage free from the manufactory, Bromley-by-Bow, London, E. Active canvassers wanted in every town.

KINAHAN'S LL WHISKY V. COGNAC BRANDY.—This celebrated old Irish Whisky rivals the finest French Brandy. It is pure, mild, mellow, delicious, and very wholesome. Sold in bottles, 4s. 8d., at the retail houses in London; by the agents in the principal towns in England; or wholesale at 8, Great Windmill Street, Haymarket.—Observe the red seal, pink label, and cork branded "Kinahan's LL Whisky."

GLENFIELD PATENT STARCH.—Messrs. Wotherspoon and Co. have been appointed Starch Purveyors to Her Royal Highness the Princess of Wales. The starch is used in the Royal laundry, and was awarded the Prize medal, being a confirmation, by some of the most eminent scientific men of the age, of the superior qualities of this world-renowned starch. Sold in packets at 4d., 1d., 2d., 4d., and 8d. each, by all respectable grocers, chandlers, oilmen, &c.—Wotherspoon and Co., Glasgow and London.

ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL.—This elegant and fragrant oil is universally in high repute for its unparalleled success in promoting the growth, restoring, and beautifying the Human Hair. Its invaluable properties have obtained the patronage of royalty and the aristocracy throughout Europe, and its introduction into the nursery of royalty. Price 3s. 6d., 7s., 10s. 6d. (equal to four small), and 21s. per bottle. Sold by chemists and perfumers.—Ask for "ROWLAND'S MACASSAR OIL."

HOLLOWAY'S PILLS.—The causes of dysentery in hot climates and diarrhoea in our own country may be safely counteracted by the purifying agency of these well-known pills. Within these few years the chance of escape from a dangerous disease was only by taking dangerous remedies; now the malady is dispelled by general purification of the blood, and its regenerating influence over every organ. Thus the very means for overcoming the sighing, vomiting, cramps, and straining include the elements of new strength. Holloway's Pills are admirable tonics and astringents, and can be confidently relied upon. Whatever may have immediately given rise to the irritation of the bowels, these pills soothe the irritated membranes and repress the excessive excitability of the intestines.

SPANISH FLY is the acting ingredient in ALEX. ROSS'S CANTHARIDES OIL, which produces whisks and thickens hair. Sold at 3s. 6d., 5s. 6d., and 10s. 6d.; or per post, 54, 84, or 144 stamps.—A. Ross, 248, High Holborn.

GREY HAIR.—248, High Holborn, London.—ALEX. ROSS'S charges for dyeing the hair—Ladies', from 7s. 6d.; gentlemen's, from 5s. The dye is sold at 3s. 6d., and sent by post for 54 stamps. Any shade produced.

ALEX. ROSS'S DESTROYER OF HAIR removes superfluous hair from the face without the slightest effect to the skin, 3s. 6d., or per post for 54 stamps. ROSS'S TOILET MAGAZINE, 1d., monthly; had of all booksellers; or for two stamps.—248, High Holborn, London.

TWO THOUSAND best SILVER WATCHES, 25s. each; 500 gold ditto, 55s. each, all warranted; 1,000 Solid Gold Guard Chains and Albert Chains, 16s. 6d. each; Gold Gem Rings and Signet ditto, 4s. each; 1,500 Solid Gold Scarf Pins, 5s. 6d. each; Gold Brooches, Earrings, Studs, and every kind of Jewellery, at a similar reduction. Country orders, per remittances, carefully attended to.—George Dyer, 90, Regent Street, London.

DENT, CHRONOMETER, WATCH, and CLOCK MAKER by Special Appointment, to her Majesty the Queen and H.R.H. the Prince of Wales, and Maker of the Great Clock for the Houses of Parliament, invites attention to the superior workmanship and elegance of design of his extensive stock of watches and drawing-room clocks.

Guin.	Guin.
Ladies' gold foreign watches 8	Strong silver lever watches 5
Gentlemen's do. do. 10	Gentlemen's gold compen-
Ladies' or Gentlemen's gold	sation balance ditto . 40
English lever do. . . 18	Silver do. do. . . 25
Marine Chronometers, 35 guineas.	

Gold and silver pocket chronometers, astronomical, turret, and bracket clocks of every description. An elegant assortment of London-made fine gold Albert and guard chains, &c.

DENT, 61, Strand (adjoining Court's Bank); 34 and 35, Royal Exchange; and at the Clock and Marine Compass Factory, Somerset Wharf, Strand, London.

TEA AT WHOLESALE PRICES.—Six Pounds for Nine Shillings. All teas are lower at this day's public sale. THE CHINESE and EAST INDIAN TEA COMPANY hasten to give the public the benefit of it by reducing their prices 3d. per lb.

PRICE LIST THIS DAY.

1. Lowest quality dusty leaf	1s. 6d. per lb.
2. Better quality, little broken	1s. 9d. "
3. Fair sound tea	2s. 0d. "
4. Good strong tea	2s. 3d. "
5. Stout heavy tea	2s. 6d. "
6. Superior tea	2s. 9d. "
7. Excellent tea	3s. 0d. "
8. Fine tea	3s. 3d. "
9. Extra fine tea	3s. 6d. "
10. Very choice tea	3s. 9d. "

THE CHINESE and EAST INDIAN TEA COMPANY, 3, Mincing Lane, E.C.

DENT'S CHRONOMETERS, WATCHES, and CLOCKS.—M. F. DENT, 33, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, Watch, Clock, and Chronometer Maker, by special appointment to her Majesty the Queen.—33, Cockspur Street, Charing Cross, corner of Spring Gardens, London.

FAMILY JARS, for securely Storing and Preserving Fruit, Jams, Pickles, Potted Meats, Butter, &c. The cheapest and best air-tight Jar is that which is hermetically sealed by Jennings's Patent Capsule, simple, cheap, and durable.—Descriptive illustrations, prices &c., from the wholesale depot, Palace-road, Lambeth, S. Retail from all china and glass dealers. general ironmongers, &c.

W. F. THOMAS and CO.'S PATENT SEWING MACHINES.—PRIZE MEDAL.—Constructed on principles which the experience of fifteen years has proved to be sound, and improved by recent modifications, these machines maintain the high reputation which they acquired on their first introduction. The work produced (alike on both sides) is unequalled for strength, beauty, regularity, and durability. Stitching by machine for the trade or private families.—66, Newgate Street, and Regent Circus, Oxford Street, London, W.

GENTLEMEN WHO DON'T RUN TAILORS' BILLS will find the Economy of Cash Payments by giving their orders to B. BENJAMIN, Merchant Tailor, 74, Regent Street, W. The 47s. Scotch Tweed and Angola Suits; the 14s. and 16s. ditto Trowsers, the Two Guinea Dress and Frock Coats; the Guinea Dress Trowsers; the Half-guinea Waistcoats. N.B.—A perfect fit guaranteed.

JOSEPH GILLOTT respectfully invites the attention of the public to the following numbers of the PATENT METALLIC PENS, which, for quality of material, easy action, and great durability, will ensure universal preference.

FOR LADIES' USE.—For fine neat writing, especially on thick and highly-finished papers, Nos. 1, 173, 303, 604. In extra-fine points.

FOR GENERAL USE.—Nos. 2, 164, 166, 168, 604. In fine points.

FOR BOLD FREE WRITING.—Nos. 3, 164, 166, 168, 604. In medium points.

FOR GENTLEMEN'S USE.—For large, free, bold writing. The Black Swan Quill, large barrel pen.—No. 808. The Patent Magnum Bonum. No. 263. In medium and broad points.

FOR GENERAL WRITING.—No. 263. In extra-fine and fine points. No. 810. New Bank Pen. No. 262. In fine points. Small barrel. No. 840. The Autograph Pen.

FOR COMMERCIAL PURPOSES.—The celebrated three-hole Correspondence Pen, No. 382. The ditto four-hole ditto, No. 202. The Public Pen, No. 292. Ditto, with bead, No. 404. Small Barrel Pens, fine and free, Nos. 392, 405, 603.

To be had of every respectable stationer in the world. Wholesale and for exportation at the manufactory, Victoria Works, Graham Street; and at 96, New Street, Birmingham; 91, John Street, New York; and of WILLIAM DAVIS, at the London Depot, 37, Gracechurch Street, E.C.

PAPER AND ENVELOPES.

THE PUBLIC SUPPLIED AT WHOLESALE PRICES,

AND

CARRIAGE PAID TO THE COUNTRY ON ORDERS EXCEEDING TWENTY SHILLINGS.

USEFUL CREAM NOTE - - -	2s 0d per Ream	Superfine CREAM-LAID ENVELOPES	4s 6d per 1000
SUPERFINE ditto - - -	3s 0d "	THICK VELLUM ditto - - -	6s 6d "
SUPERFINE THICK ditto - - -	4s 0d "	LARGE BLUE COMMERCIAL ditto - - -	4s 6d "
LARGE BLUE COMMERCIAL ditto - - -	3s 0d "	BLACK-BORDERED ENVELOPES - - -	1s 0d per 100
Patent STRAW PAPER - - -	1s 9d "	CHEAP BUFF ENVELOPES - - -	2s 9d per 1000
FOOLSCAP PAPER - - -	6s 6d "	TINTED LINED NOTE, 5 colours - - -	1s 6d 5 quires.
SERMON PAPER - - -	3s 6d "	ENVELOPES for ditto - - -	1s 0d per 100

NO CHARGE FOR STAMPING CRESTS, INITIALS, ARMS, OR ADDRESS
ON PAPER OR ENVELOPES.

POLISHED STEEL CREST DIES ENGRAVED FOR 5s.; BUSINESS DIES, FROM 2s. 6d.; COLOUR STAMPING
(RELIEF) REDUCED TO 4s. PER REAM.

PARTRIDGE & COZENS' "IMPROVED PRIZE WRITING-CASE,"

FITTED WITH ENVELOPES, PAPER, BLOTTING-BOOK, PENHOLDER, PENCIL, &c., 1s. 6d. each, or Post-free for 22 Stamps.

"This neat, commodious, and ingenious case is a marvel of cheapness and utility; being small enough to carry in a coat pocket, and yet containing every requisite for correspondence. It also possesses the quality of being Waterproof, which must render it particularly serviceable to persons travelling."—*Vide Civil Service Gazette.*

This is the Case recently noticed and approved of by the Society of Arts as being "conveniently and neatly arranged."

PHOTOGRAPHIC ALBUMS,

From 2s. 6d. to 5 Guineas.

THE LARGEST AND BEST ASSORTMENT IN THE KINGDOM.

DESPATCH BOXES, TRAVELLING WRITING-CASES, LETTER SCALES, INKSTANDS, WALNUT
AND OAK STATIONERY CABINETS, &c. &c.

PARTRIDGE AND COZENS,

192, FLEET STREET, and 1 and 2, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON, E.C.

PRICE LIST POST FREE. TRADE SUPPLIED.

THE LONDON READER

Of Literature, Science, Art, and General Information.

PART 9, VOL. II.—FEBRUARY, 1864.

CONTENTS.

	PAGE
A YOUNG GIRL FROM THE COUNTRY	225, 257, 305, 337, 377
WOMAN AND HER MASTER	245, 269, 311, 342, 362
SIBYL'S CLIFF	249, 281, 302, 340, 360
MAN AND HIS IDOL	241, 273, 297, 329
SELF-MADE; OR, OUT OF THE DEPTHS	267, 293, 345, 373
THE THREE ROSES	236, 284, 295
MRS. LARKALL'S BOARDING SCHOOL	289, 321, 353
OUR CHRISTMAS STORY	228, 260
THE ENGINEER'S STORY	231
WILHELMINA	233
THE PREDICTION	238
BE KIND TO THE POOR	252
THE LOYAL PAGE	264

	PAGE
O-DAH-MIN, THE INDIAN GIRL	277
THE ZINGARO	296
THE MANIAC BRIDE	301
ROSALIE DE CLAIRVILLE	308
THE WRECKED HEART	324
THE EXQUISITE	333
THE PHANTOM	334
THE TRIFLER'S PUNISHMENT	335
THE TWO BRIDEGROOMS	358
THUNDERBOLT AND LIGHTFOOT	365
FISH CULTURE	366
THE SECRET CHAMBER	369
ADVENTURES IN AFRICA	376

ILLUSTRATIONS.

	PAGE
JOHN SHADOW OPENING THE COFFIN OF HIS MURDERED SON	225
THE GIRDERS OF THE CHARING CROSS RAILWAY AT LONDON BRIDGE	233
THE IRON-CLAD, MINOTAUR	240
FLORA TELLS THE COUNTESS AND BLANCHE HOW TO SAVE MARK	241
SIR RASHLEIGH BRANDON FINDS HIMSELF IN ROUGH COMPANY	249
THE DETECTIVES	257
THE NORTH AMERICAN STEAM-RAM MAN-OF-WAR	272
RABY'S SEARCH IN THE REGISTERS STOPPED	273
ADRIANA LOVELACE IN PERIL	281
MEREDITH THREATENS TO PROCLAIM LORD SANDOUN'S FORMER LIFE	297

	PAGE
THE ANGER OF THE MYSTERIOUS BEAUTY	288
SIR RASHLEIGH BRANDON REJECTED BY MISS LOVELACE	304
GRANBY SAVILLE'S FIRST MEETING WITH CICELY CROWE	305
ELLA AND CLAUDE	313
THE STRUNG DIAMONDS	321
MEREDITH OFFERS THE EARL A PROOF OF HIS SINCERITY	329
THE SUFFOLK MEMORIAL OF THE LATE PRINCE CONSORT	336
THE ONLY SURVIVOR OF THE OCEAN MAIL	337
GERTRUDE DOUBTS ROLAND HERNSHAW	353
PRESENT APPEARANCE OF FORT SUMTER	357
PALACE OF THEIR ROYAL HIGHNESSES THE PRINCE AND PRINCESS LOUIS OF HESSE	368
ETHEL CLIFTON, IN THE MAY QUEEN'S CHAIR, CARRIED BY GERALD AND VERNOR	369
CLARA MANSFIELD'S INTERVIEW WITH MARSTON	377

PRICE SIXPENCE.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY J. E. GELDER, 334, STRAND,
AND SOLD BY ALL RESPECTABLE BOOKSELLERS.